

DRAMATICS

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Scene from the production of Thornton Wilder's **Our Town** at the Cain Park Theatre, Cleveland Heights, Ohio. Directed by John Hulburt. Setting designed by Graham Gloster Bird. (See article on page 10.)

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NOTES AND by the EDITOR FOOTNOTES

Twenty-nine high school students from six foreign countries visited Washington, D. C., on Feb. 2 and 3 as guests of the Civic Education Service, publisher of THE AMERICAN OBSERVER. These students were brought to this country from British Isles, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, and Australia by the Scandinavian Airlines to take part in the New York HERALD TRIBUNE Youth Forum held on March 6. All were winners of essay contests in their native lands where they wrote in English on the subject, "The World We Want."

Both high school and college teachers too often abandon civic education to newspapers, radio, and the movies. Yet these media are not designed for education. Their jobs are to provide news, amusement, and advertising copy. This is the conclusion reached after a two-year study by the Institute on Citizenship of the Kansas State College.

Are your book shelves crowded with a ten-years' accumulation of magazines, duplicate books, complimentary copies sent by publishers? Cleaning them out would give you space and make available to teachers overseas the tools which are urgently needed in many countries. Why not send all reading

materials you don't need to "NEA", The American Book Center, care of Library of Congress, Washington 25, D. C. Send them prepaid freight or book post. The Center will reimburse you if you are unable to afford the shipping cost.

Five \$1000 Theatrical Fellowships for 1948 have been awarded this spring by the Department of Speech and Drama of Stanford University, California. Successful applicants began their work on March 29. Assignments will be completed on August 28 of this year.

It is widely known that the speech and dramatics work in many of our high schools is in urgent need of better trained teachers and directors. It is also widely known that in many instances persons with no special qualifications in these fields are required to direct plays and supervise speech programs. For these reasons, we urge all teachers in need of training to attend summer school. A number of our well known colleges and universities have announced extremely worth while courses in theatre, drama, radio, and speech for this coming summer. These provide opportunities for professional improvement that should not be overlooked.

If past performances are any criteria at all, we can soon expect to receive attractive folders from Summer Theatres announcing opening for "a limited number of apprentices", "experience with professionals", and "opportunities for employment on the stage, screen and radio", etc. To those who feel the need for securing Summer Theatre experience, we can only wish encouragement, but at the same time we urge

these good people to investigate carefully before they invest their money in the form of enrollment fees. As we have pointed out on previous occasions, there are throughout the country a number of Summer Theatres nationally known for their fine work. There are others, we regret to say, which bloom out of nowhere every season, often in a different "barn" or "estate" under a new name, but with the same promoters year after year, whose sole concern is to attract fat enrollment fees on the basis of promises that are never fulfilled. It is against this type of Summer Theatre that special precautions should be taken.

With this issue, we bring our 1947-48 publication season to a close. Our program for the 1948-49 school term is now in the planning stage. Besides the usual departments, we shall publish this coming season a series of thrilling articles telling the story of the showboat theatres in America. These articles are being written by Professor G. Harry Wright of the Kent State University Theatre. Professor Wright is combing the entire eastern United States for information. We also plan the publication of a series of articles on make-up designed primarily as "lessons" for high school dramatics clubs and classes. A third series of articles will discuss occupational opportunities in the professional, community, and educational theatres, as well as occupational opportunities in the films, radio, and television. Of course, we shall also carry a number of articles on a wide range of theatre subjects, all of which will make our 1948-49 volume of DRAMATICS MAGAZINE one of the best in our history. If your subscription expires with this issue, we suggest that you renew it at once and thereby make certain that your first copy of the new season will reach you on time.

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Crouse and Lindsay

The Last of a Series of Seven Articles on New American Playwrights

By PAUL MYERS

Theatre Collection, New York Public Library, New York 18, N. Y.

IT may come as something of a shock to discover an article about the playwriting team of Russel Crouse and Howard Lindsay in a series purportedly devoted to studies of new dramatists. Neither could be described as a struggling experimental playwright. Both have been among the "ins" of the American theatre for some time. All of the subjects of the preceding studies, though they have won recognition for one or more plays, have been individuals who are still in a formative stage. It would be almost impossible to foretell the nature of the development of Tennessee Williams, of Arthur Miller, or of Harry Brown. Of Crouse and Lindsay, it can be safely said that they will continue to give the theatre one successful comedy after another. The plays will be either pieces which laugh gently at a prevailing vogue or current of thought, or they will be pieces which depend for their success on the generous sentiment which is inherent in all theatregoers.

"Why, then", one will ask, "do a study of Crouse and Lindsay?" It seems fitting to conclude this series with them because, in themselves, they reflect a picture of the whole American theatre of 1948. They are not typical of the present theatre-worker—for one thing they are enormously more successful than most. They, however, embrace in their activity all of the phases of the current theatre. In addition, they execute all of the duties of all the phases flawlessly. They have, through the multiplicity of their theatrical experiences, acquired a knowledge of what the theatregoer wants and have been empowered with the ability to deliver it. They serve, then, both as dessert and as summary. They may not, in their expression, represent what every young playwright hopes to acquire; but, in their practice, they represent what every theatre aspirant must understand.

Howard Lindsay was born in 1889 and acquired a feeling for the stage at an early age. He was only three when his parents separated and he went with his mother to Atlantic City, N. J., where she worked as a compositor for his uncle's newspapers, the ATLANTIC CITY UNION and the EGG HARBOR GAZETTE. According to legend, an elocution teacher worked off her unpaid advertising bill by giving young Howard lessons. The family moved to Boston when Howard was thirteen, and he attended the Boston Latin School from 1903-07 and won a scholarship at Harvard. After a year, however, at the august institution of learning, he switched to the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York. He was there only six months before he accepted a part in a touring company of Margaret

Mayo's *Polly of the Circus*. The next four years were spent in vaudeville, tent shows, burlesque and even in some appearances in the embryo motion picture. After a tour in the company of McKee Rankin, he was successful in getting a place in Margaret Anglin's troupe and played in her repertory of plays for five years. "It was a great education," Lindsay has said. "She knew the theatre thoroughly, everything from the business end to the natural playing." Here, no doubt, are the roots of the present success. Here, too, is the type of training that is well-nigh impossible to secure today.

Russel Crouse was born four years later than his partner, in Findlay, Ohio. His education was gained in the public schools of Toledo. At the age of 17, he embarked upon a career as reporter for the CINCINNATI COMMERCIAL TRIBUNE, which led him through the next seven years to similar posts with the KANSAS CITY STAR and the CINCINNATI

POST. His career was interrupted by entrance of the United States into the war just as Lindsay's was. Here we have the first common factor in the lives of the two men. Crouse served as a yeoman 2nd class in the United States Navy from 1917 to 1919; Lindsay went to France with the 76th Division in 1918 and served there for thirteen months.

It was not long before both were back at their professions. Indeed, the last five months of Lindsay's term overseas were spent directing productions of the Brest Stock Company, which presented plays for the entertainment of troops awaiting shipment home. Upon his return, he rejoined Margaret Anglin but the engagement was short-lived. Just at this time, the actors' strike which resulted in the formation of Actors' Equity Association took place. Howard Lindsay was pro-Equity; Miss Anglin, who functioned as both an actress and as a manager, was against the formation of the union. This difference was, then, a bitter one and it led to the termination of their professional relationships. His first professional triumph came with the production of DULCY, the George S. Kaufman-Marc Connelly comedy which marked a high point, too, in the early career of Lynn Fontanne. In addition to enacting the role of Vincent Leach, Howard Lindsay was entrusted with the direction of the play. The production opened at the Cort Theatre in Chicago in February, 1921, and came into the Frazee in New York on the 13th of the following August. Its success established Lindsay more firmly as a director than as an actor.



Russel Crouse (left) and Howard Lindsay, successful playwright team and producers.

After his discharge from the navy, Russel Crouse remained in the field of journalism, but came nearer the theatre by transferring the scene of his activities to New York. He worked, successively for the NEW YORK GLOBE, the NEW EVENING MAIL and the NEW YORK EVENING POST. For the last-named, he wrote his well-remembered column, *Left At The Post*, from 1923-29. He made his acting debut at the Henry Miller Theatre in New York on the 27th of August, 1928, when he appeared as Bellflower in Ward Morehouse's comedy of newspaper life, *Gentlemen of the Press*. His appearance was calculated to lend the production a note of reality. His success in the eight line role can be estimated from the notice paid him by Brooks Atkinson in his review of the play for the NEW YORK TIMES: "One R. Crouse, who has been picked from the Evening Post staff to bring a touch of verisimilitude to a newspaper play, spoke his lines gently last evening. His performance was muted as Duse."

Through the late twenties and early thirties both men were engaged along similar lines. By 1933, Crouse had written scenarios for several short films about newspaper life; collaborated with Oscar Hammerstein, II and Morris Ryskind on the book of the musical, *THE GANCS ALL HERE* which ran for 23 performances in New York during February 1931 and with Corey Ford on the book of the more successful Joe Cook musical, *HOLD YOUR HORSES*. Lindsay had collaborated with Bertrand Robinson on *TOMMY* (1927), *YOUR UNCLE DUDLEY* (1929) and *OH, PROMISE ME* (1930). Crouse was supplementing his experience by serving as press agent for the Theatre Guild; Lindsay by acting and directing.

Their work with one another began when they were called in to make revisions on the book of the musical, *Anything Goes*. This was the now fabulous production with the Cole Porter score (including "You're the Top," "All Through the Night" and the title song) whose cast included William Gaxton, Victor Moore, Ethel Merman, and Bettina Hall. In it, Mr. Moore contributed his unforgettable performance as Public Enemy No. 13. Directed, too, by Mr. Lindsay; it established the team as musical comedy experts. In 1936, they did the book for *Red, Hot and Blue!* (which also had a Cole Porter score and Ethel Merman with Jimmy Durant); and in 1937, *Hooray for What*, which starred Ed Wynn. Both of these, too, were staged by Howard Lindsay; both enormously successful.

The authors of musical comedy books, however, were not at that time considered seriously as writers. Though, *OF THEE I SING* had broken precedent in 1932 by winning the Pulitzer Prize for a musical comedy; this field of expression had not come into the regard it has achieved during the past few seasons. It was not until Crouse and Lindsay created *LIFE WITH FATHER* from the essays of Clarence Day, that they established themselves as dramatists. So secure an establishment, however, has rarely been witnessed. Both men had been attracted by Day's reminis-

cences of his New York boyhood. Some of the family were at first reluctant to allow themselves to be set down in dramatic fashion. No one could resist the treatment given it by these two playwrights. Father and Mother Day emerged as prototypes of everybody's parents; the family as all families would like to see themselves.

Life With Father began its career at the Lakewood Theatre in Skowhegan, Maine, on the 14th of August, 1939. Mr. Lindsay and his wife, Dorothy Stickney, appeared as Clarence and Vinnie Day. Its pre-Broadway engagement began at the Maryland Theatre in Baltimore on the following October 30th. On the 8th of November, 1939, it opened at the Empire Theatre in New York, its record breaking engagement. When it closed on the 12th of July, 1947, it had established a new long-run record in the theatre of 3,213 performances. During its seven and one-half years on Broadway, it had grossed over \$5,000,000. Touring companies had played almost 3000 performances grossing another \$5,000,000. It has been played in England, Denmark, Sweden, Italy, Spain, South America, Australia, France, and the film version will encompass the world. Rarely, are dramatists this well established! Produced by Oscar Serlin and directed by Bretaigne Windust, the production of *Life With Father* firmly set Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse as figures in the American theatre.

Their standing has been further set during the past several seasons. Though such success as that accorded the play about the Day family will not be rivaled; they have met with fortune. In 1941, the team set themselves up as producers with the offering of Joseph Kesserling's *Arsenic and Old Lace*. No one, I feel sure, is unfamiliar with the mad tale of the Brewster sisters, their mad brother Jonathan and their dramatic-brother, Mortimer, and of their novel method of "bringing peace" to lonely old men by serving them elderberry wine with arsenic and "just a pinch of cyanide". It, too, enjoyed a long run, road duplications and a filming. As press-agented by Richard Maney, its run gave rise to many wonderful tales of backstage and on-stage happenings. It marked the emergence of a play's financial backer as a figure of prominence rather than as a rather hazy character who functioned silently in the background. Russel Crouse appeared in publicity stills as one of the corpses in the window-seat or as one of thirteen revived corpses who trooped out of the cellar each evening to take a curtain call. It is one of the gayest engagements in New York theatre history, and secured the new firm of Crouse and Lindsay in the affections of the profession and of the audience alike.

On the 30th September, 1942, they produced, in association with Oscar Serlin, their own play, *STRIP FOR ACTION*. While not the overwhelming success of their other ven-

tures, the play lasted for 110 performances. It shows the ability of the team to capitalize upon current situations. The topmost note of the time was the draft and the entrance of this country into World War II. At that precise moment, the picture was rather black. Of immensely lesser importance, was the closing in New York of the burlesque theatres. Combining their knowledge of the latter with the world picture, Crouse and Lindsay presented a tale of a former burlesque comic who invites his former associates to give a show for his army buddies. The formula is sure-fire. Given the accomplished production which is the mark of all their productions; it could hardly fail. Once again Bretaigne Windust is credited with the direction.

Never ones to relax or to revert to pure formula, however, Crouse and Lindsay chose for the next production a serious play, *The Hasty Heart*, by John Patrick. One of the finest dramas to have come, thus far, out of the recent world conflict, *The Hasty Heart* is a production they can certainly reflect upon with pride. Set in a hospital ward, it related with simplicity and dramatic clarity, how a group of disparately raised fellows won over a dour misogynist. All had one great factor in common — they were wounded veterans, and this bound them strongly together and eventually won over all resistance. To quote myself on the production: "It represented the problem of the world in little." (My review of *The Hasty Heart* for this magazine.)

Crouse and Lindsay's most recent production has been of their *STATE OF THE UNION*, which opened at the Hudson Theatre in New York on the 14th November, 1945. Once again, they capitalized upon a timely situation, filtered it through their mastery of dramatic technique and added their flair for comedy. The situation was that of the difficulty of the Republican party in finding a presidential candidate. Into the play, they were able to bring characters who were more than a little reminiscent of leading contemporary figures — always a very popular device. Great effect, too, was created by inserting a new line at each performance at the point at which one of the characters in the play reads aloud a newspaper heading (one might recall Russel Crouse's journalistic training.) It was, again, a flawlessly set production.

I trust all of the foregoing will elucidate my reasons for including Russel Crouse and Howard Lindsay in this series. This, with the addition of the note that their future in the theatre seems assured of being an important and a happy one. The NEW YORK TIMES of February 13, 1948, carried the following note: "*Life With Mother* still lacks a director. Accordingly, the Detroit opening has been postponed again. This time from April 5th to May 31st. Should Bretaigne Windust be able to unshackle himself from Hollywood, he'll stage the Howard Lindsay — Russel Crouse comedy. The outlook is dim, though. The directorial problem would be solved by an affirmative nod from Joshua Logan."

Life With Mother is based on more stories from the collection of the late Clarence Day. Yippee . . . here we go again!



Scene from the Louisiana State University production of **OUR TOWN**, directed by C. L. Shaver. All scenic elements were purely constructivistic (without decoration of any kind), but skillful lighting effects for each scene gave the production a feeling of impressionism.

Constructivism

The Seventh in a Series of Articles on Styles of Scene Design

By **RICHARD CORSON**

161 Prince Street, New York, N. Y.

CONSTRUCTIVISM is probably the least used of all the styles discussed. It originally came into being in Russia, Meyerhold being one of its chief exponents, and was rather widely used there. Then the experimental theatres in America took up the cause, apparently just because it was something different, not necessarily because they accepted the philosophy behind the development of such a mechanistic type of staging. It certainly has little contribution to make to any dramatic performance, at least in the form in which it is usually used.

Constructivism is the reduction of form to its structural elements by the elimination of all ornamentation. It might be called anti-decorative. If you think of the Russian drama of a few decades ago, you can probably see what the constructivists were driving at. A good set is not one which the audience must analyze logically in order to appreciate it. It must create a mood the instant the audience sees it, or, if it is to express certain ideas, those ideas must be put across quickly and clearly. A set which is bizarre without apparent reason is disturbing and detracts from the play.

Perhaps the style should be explained more fully. A constructivistic platform, for example, would not be covered on the front. Rather, all construction would be permitted to show. A flight of steps would be just the treads and stringers — nothing more. A ladder might often be used instead. A constructivist set is essentially an unfinished one, usually vaguely formalistic.

The most recent Broadway attempt at constructivism was in **OUR TOWN**. It was not quite the original type nor was it pure constructivism. Since lights were used very extensively to give a constantly changing mood and emphasis, the style might better be called impressionistic constructivism. But very little decoration was used. The play was played on

a bare stage with back wall exposed, and props consisted of ladders, unpainted trellises, and chairs. The style was appropriate inasmuch as the stage was presented as a stage, nothing more, and the characters were introduced by a narrator. There was something almost haunting about coming into the theatre and being confronted by a stage completely dark and completely bare of all theatrical trappings and at the end having the blue traveler open to reveal the stage once again dark and bare, the very real and human people of the play having lived their lives over for us and departed whence they came. The staging was a stunt but a very effective one.

Recently, I saw an experimental production of the American Theatre Wing which was designed purely to give young actors a chance to be seen. Almost no money was spent on the staging — far less, at least, than on the most limited of high school shows. The original script required that action take place both in the house (in two different rooms) and in front of the house, sometime simultaneously. The stage was a very tiny one, and the solution to the problem was rather ingenious. Unpainted 1x3 battens framed the front of the house with one door and one window. Back of this the stage was partitioned by a similar frame with just a door to divide it into living room and kitchen. The framework was purely practical, completely undecorative, yet it was not without interest. Once we in the audience caught on to the plan of the thing, we accepted it and very nearly forgot its oddity. It became just a part of the background. After all, the audience is used to accepting certain

conventions in the theatre, such as the missing fourth wall, and they will go just about as far as you want them to in accepting additional conventions. In this case, I hardly think the setting added tremendously to the play, but it was a very practical solution to the scenic problem.

Constructivism is not a style you will have much use for. It is appropriate primarily for leftist plays glorifying the worker and for occasional plays where it can be used effectively as a stunt.

IN conclusion, then, we have discussed seven basic styles of scenic design: formalism, naturalism, realism, impressionism, expressionism, theatricalism, and constructivism. Each of these (with the exception of naturalism, which is now dated), may be used in combination with certain others, and each may be stylized, resulting in a greater number of distinct styles.

The styles in most common use today in this country are realism, stylized realism, formalism, impressionistic formalism, impressionism, stylized impressionism, formalistic impressionism, expressionism, stylized expressionism, and stylized theatricalism. During the past season on Broadway realism was predominant, as always, with stylized impressionism and stylized theatricalism cropping up now and then.

Let me repeat that there is no magic merely in knowing such terms and being able to define them. The purpose of these articles has been to help provide a working vocabulary for designers, directors, students, and teachers and to point out the variety of style actually in use on our stages and the even greater variety possible.

It is a sad state of affairs when our schools are so far behind the times, so ignorant of modern theatre, that they still order old-fashioned painted wing and backdrop sets of pretty painted woodland mountain scenes, complete with old mills and running brooks, and then use them indiscriminately for all exteriors — sometimes even for interiors. It is even more sad when a director of a well-known college theatre and a designer quibble for three months over set designs for a show simply because

NOTICE

Mr. Corson's series of seven articles on styles of scene design published in **DRAMATICS MAGAZINE** this season will be reprinted in booklet form, with copies available at a nominal price about June 1. Order copies from **THE NATIONAL THESPIAN SOCIETY**, College Hill Station, Cincinnati 24, Ohio.

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by ELIZABETH McFADDEN

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they are unable to talk the same language. In the particular case in question approximately thirty scenes were involved, mostly exteriors. The designer submitted stylized impressionistic designs, then designs in other styles, but the director was never satisfied. Unfortunately, she was completely unable to tell the designer why she wasn't satisfied or what she wanted. At one point she said she thought she wanted realism and at another point she stated specifically she wanted a combination of Rockwell Kent and cubism. It turned out that what she really wanted was stylized theatricalism. A basic technical vocabulary in common and some knowledge of the common styles of design would have saved three months of wasted motion and frayed nerves.

Styles in design are constantly changing. They reflect our modern culture and our modern way of life. We cannot continue to design our sets the same way year after year if we expect to keep up with the theatre of today. Audiences no longer expect a standard naturalistic or realistic setting. They are eager for new experiments and are always willing to accept them when they are cleverly designed and effectively used to contribute to the total effect of the play. Don't be satisfied with the old and the conventional. Always be alert for something new, and always be eager to experiment, not just for the sake of being different, but in the hope of increasing the effectiveness of your staging.

Rehearsal Procedure

By TALBOT PEARSON

Department of Drama, Carnegie Institute of Technology, Pittsburgh, Pa.

NO two directors will ever be found in complete agreement on rehearsal procedure. There is, of course, no definite book of rules, nor should there be. In the practice of a craft such as play production, individuality must be allowed full play and not be stifled by cramping restrictions. Nevertheless, there are certain items of procedure not merely sanctified by custom but actually proven, by hundreds of practitioners, to be basic and essential to an orderly scheme. Variations from the norm are not only permissible but should actually be encouraged where individual temperament or local conditions make them desirable. But the wood is more important than the trees, and the director with a zeal for experiment should remember that in every art, in every craft, revolutionary techniques are successfully undertaken only by those who know the rules they set out to break. The selection of the cast actually belongs in a discussion of rehearsal procedure, but there are so many methods of trying out the available players that no rules can safely be applied. To list the dozen or more differing approaches would serve no practical purpose at this time. We shall, therefore, assume the cast to have been chosen and go on from there.

The director will be expected to have given some considerable study to the script before attempting to assemble a cast. It is too late to decide whether the play is drama or tragedy, comedy or farce, after the players must have been called together. Questions such as these must be answered long before the first student begins his or her hesitant reading of the suggested part. It is the director's responsibility to have clearly in his mind the style, mood and rhythm of the play before he begins to prompt the somewhat less than expert readers who are to take part. Because no director, no good teacher, is going to be able to sit back, silent and unmoved, while lines are tortured and characterization distorted by the well-meaning but usually incapable readers. The producer has to be teacher first and director second, and although previous study of the script gives him a towering advantage, it is one to be used discriminately and helpfully. Sarcasm, therefore, is out; so is irritation of any kind. A calm, cheerful, confident demeanor and a very patent enthusiasm for the play is all-important.

Before proceeding to move around the stage the cast should read the play once or twice, with the director correcting any false emphases, pointing out where stresses should be applied, and generally helping, by suggestion

and demonstration, to develop the characterizations and clarify the story. After a couple of these sessions, another one might well be devoted to a roundtable discussion of the characters and the story, each player being encouraged to discover the contribution which he or she makes to the plot-development, the impact they may have on the other characters, and to understand the psychology of the person they are to portray.

While individual expression should not be discouraged, the teacher-director should never lose sight of the fact that he (or she, as is more likely; the masculine pronoun comes from habit) must retain the guiding hand. If the interpretation of any role is at odds with the director's conception, the two points of view must be reconciled completely before rehearsals proceed. In other words, the director directs, and he must have such a complete and exhaustive knowledge of the script (that is, of the characterizations, of the movements to be made, of the "business" to be used, and of the author's meaning and objective) that the players will be literally awed into compliance with their leader's plans and instructions. To permit analysis of their characterizations is intended as a step in the process of their self-development, not as an invitation to anarchy.

The next step is to "block" the action. Again this is a move which the director must prepare in advance. If an acting version of the play is to be used, it will probably contain the fullest instructions about entrances and exits, moves and gestures, risings-up and sittings-down. This is not always an advantage, especially to the director who wishes to be individual and original. There is no reason, after all, why the Broadway version of the play should be the only possible approach, still less that that the printed instructions (which may or may not stem from a New York production) should be regarded as possessing some special virtue, yet in the eyes of the students these printed words are apt to carry the authority of Holy Writ, sacred and unalterable. If the director has a conception in mind which is contrary to, or even a slight modification of the printed version, this is a point to be clearly stated at the start of rehearsals. The teacher-director would be well-advised to explain, before "blocking" starts, that certain alterations are going to be made; that, for example, "the New York set was very different from the one we have to use, that our stage is smaller (or larger — or shallower) than the one on 42nd Street," and that, to put it briefly, "what your director says, goes."

The blocking process should proceed, one act at a time, and should not be hurried. If an act is to take forty minutes to perform, it will take at least three times that long to block out the stage movements, even if these comprise only the actual changes of position and not the "business" of hats, coats, handbags, coffee cups and revolvers. If the play is a one-acter no more than two rehearsal periods would be occupied with this process. In the case of a three-act play, it would obviously take three times that number. After each act has been treated in this way, the director should go back to the first act again and have the players walk through it (granted a two hour period for work) at least twice. The next day the second act, and then the third.

There is a great temptation to spend too much time on the first, or even the first and second acts, to the detriment of the third. Even if the play is in one act, and delays occur in rehearsals so that the bell rings before the end is reached, some way must be found to divide the attention equally between the opening and closing sections of the piece. Even a one-act can be divided into two parts so that some rehearsals will only begin at the middle of the play. Experience will dictate the timing of these divisions of rehearsal, but proper organization is most important if a balance is to be arrived at.

A time-table should be worked out before rehearsals start, to allow a minimum of twenty rehearsals of at least two hours each, on a three-act play. For a one-act let us say eight sessions each long enough to take the play through at least twice. These are minimum requirements. There is no such thing as too much rehearsal, though there may be too many sessions where no rehearsing is done. Mere walking-through, going through the motions and saying the lines is not rehearsing. It is the director's responsibility to see that the rehearsal sessions are sufficiently exciting and so provided with helpful guidance and commentary that the players grow in their parts and moreover can recognize the growth in themselves and in each other.

To come back to the time-table. Assuming six sessions spent on blocking, with the lines not yet memorized, three more spent in elaborating the movements, adding "business" and timing exits and entrances, then three more should be used doing the same thing without books. By this time the director ought to be able to insist upon the lines being completely memorized. He should ask for each act at a time, going through them if possible two or three times in the period allotted, with the prompter avoiding delays by throwing the lines immediately when the "blank" arises. In order to give him time for memorizing, which should always be done away from rehearsal, it is well to have a break of one or two days between the times that each act is taken without books. The intervening time can be well used by the teacher either in rehearsing individual players who are backward, in discussing technical details with his staff, or even catching up on his reading and marking of papers.

All this has so far occupied twelve full rehearsal periods. Now comes the



Scene from a production of William Gillette's **Secret Service** directed by Talbot Pearson for the department of drama of Carnegie Institute of Technology.

time to put all three acts (or two parts of a one-act) together, and my very strong personal preference is for an uninterrupted run-through with the prompter very much on the alert. It is too much to hope that prompting will not be needed at this stage, but rehearsals would proceed without stops and delays arising from directorial corrections. The director should be making copious notes to give to the cast either at the end of the run-through or, better still, just before they start to rehearse again the following day. After two complete run-throughs, even with the note treatment, it will be found that certain scenes and certain individual performers need some quite considerable overhauling. Before the next run-through, that is, rehearsal No. 15, these backward scenes should be worked over in semi-privacy to bring them up to concert pitch.

Four more complete rehearsals (numbers 15, 16, 17, 18) bring us to the technical rehearsal, the one which always should precede the actual dress rehearsal. At the "technical", it is not necessary to go through all the dialogue, only that part which affects entrances, exits, difficult business with costumes or props, light cues and the proper start or finish of each act.

For this rehearsal the actors are presumed to be amply prepared and ready to assist the technical people by falling in and out of character easily and quickly so as to accommodate the electrician or the property mistress who have only this and the dress rehearsal in which to perfect their contribution. By all means

have a "technical" if you can. It saves much time which can be spent on making the dress rehearsal a smooth one. It removes many anxieties arising from uncertainty as to whether this or that will work, and it gives you one more day to alter a costume, change an unworkable prop or try a new shape of moustache or hair-do.

The dress rehearsal should be in every respect a performance except for the presence of an audience. There are always some wisecracks who proclaim that a bad "dress" means a good opening. That is a dangerous philosophy, propounded by people who are usually trying to cover up their own incompetency or procrastinators who have been lucky not to have the audience walk out on their first nights. It is better to be sure, by getting all the "bugs" out at the technical rehearsal, by letting the dress rehearsal go smoothly without interruption, and to have an opening performance go with the authority and precision that comes from confidence. The players will have fewer butterflies in the stomach, and the director may even stave off stomach ulcers.

A few last words of a general nature: Don't take chances with any detail of the production. Make sure the timetable allows for emergencies. Be punctual in arriving for rehearsal and also in getting started. Don't encourage visitors at rehearsals; they always come on the bad days, and they make poor press agents.

Don't permit any noise backstage. Have frequent breaks to allow youthful animal spirits a vent, but insist upon proper respect for the play while in actual rehearsal.

Don't shout at your actors. Interrupt as little as possible. It may sound impressive when visitors are present, but the actors will react more favorably to a conference or a written note after rehearsal. Don't hide yourself in the dark at the back of the auditorium. Let the players see you, intense and keen, at all times. Try sitting in the side seats occasionally and correct your stage pictures so that practically everyone in the audience will be able to see the action, the doors and the faces of the characters.

If there are any love scenes, rehearse them separately and privately until they are competently performed. By that

NOTICE

The series of seven articles on rehearsal techniques published in **DRAMATICS MAGAZINE** this season will be reprinted in booklet form, with copies available at a small fee about June 1. Order from **THE NATIONAL THESPIAN SOCIETY**, College Hill Station, Cincinnati 24, Ohio.

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There was recreation aplenty but little leisure for students of the Lubbock Public Schools who took part in the school's Summer Playhouse. Here assisted by D. W. Howell, director, students are preparing the set for their first performance of the summer.

time they may be safely incorporated into the action, perhaps to be received with awe-struck admiration by the rest of the cast, rather than with the wolf-calls that usually greet the self-conscious fumbblings of the average student couple doing a stage embrace for the first time.

Above all, remember Hamlet's advice to his mother, under somewhat different circumstances: "Assume a virtue, if you have it not." Try to look calm, and speak so, even though the nerves are shreds; and air of confidence will do wonders for an anxious cast. And calmness and confidence are more becoming to any director, male or female, than the worried look, the petulant voice, or the restless prowling.

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Mention Dramatics Magazine

A Free Summer Playhouse

By MRS. ROSS AYERS

Lubbock Public Schools, Lubbock, Texas

MAKE-UP KITS, saws, and hammers for scenery construction, as well as yearnings for dramatic expression, were not locked away on the closing day of regular school in Lubbock, Texas, last spring. Rather, students of junior and senior high schools were invited to put all facilities for dramatics to use right through the summer as they took part in the school's first free summer playhouse.

To keep the schools open for twelve months in order that both students and adults might continue to enjoy all school facilities, Superintendent R. W. Matthews started, in 1945, to make plans to offer a free summer session in 1947. Included in the recreational program was a summer theatre which would be free to any students of junior or senior high school, regardless of prerequisites. The result of the summer plan was that in Lubbock, a city of 50,000 located on the South Plains of Texas, a free summer session was enjoyed by 2,500 students and adults.

Under the direction of D. M. Howell, Lubbock's first summer playhouse presented three play-nights for the public and gave fifty-seven students a summer of enjoyable recreation, all for fun rather than for credit! Working for six weeks each were Lois Marie Killian and A. B. Reese, while Howell was on duty for the entire twelve-week period.

During the summer of 1946 credit work in dramatics had been offered, with twenty-five students taking part, but both students and teachers seemed to enjoy the non-credit work of 1947, and teachers noted that students worked

just as hard and seemed to enjoy their work more than when they were working for credit.

Many high school students have such a full program during the long session, they are not able to take all the special work they want in such fields as dramatics, art, crafts, and typing. The Lubbock plan made it possible for students to get additional dramatic training which they could not have received otherwise.

The workshop for the summer playhouse was the stage of the senior high school building, where students met each afternoon from 5 until 6:30 o'clock. Specialized work in acting, make-up, lighting, costuming, and stage-craft was offered, and students prepared for public performance five one-act plays and one three-act play.

Because of the success of the summer playhouse, plans are already being made for expansion during this coming summer so that students in elementary grades and adults will be able to take part. Lubbock is a town without a Little Theatre or a Children's Theatre, so the school's summer project may be able to supply this lack or aid in creating interest in such endeavors.

As school started last fall, dramatic teachers in Lubbock saw another advantage for their summer theatre. Students were already prepared and could give excellent performance for a one-act play during the third week of school.

A summer theatre for high school students provides many opportunities and benefits. Here is one other way in which to expand the dramatics program.

Drama Festivals in Britain

By GEORGE TAYLOR

Editor, The Amateur Stage, London, England

THE competitive drama festival holds supreme place in the amateur theatre in Britain. It is the highest dramatic achievement of the amateur! Although many non-competitive festivals are held in Britain, and the non-competitive system is upheld as the ideal by many recognized authorities, critical opinion is in favour of the competitive system.

John Bourne, the most experienced adjudicator in Britain, writing in *THE AMATEUR STAGE* puts the whole controversy in a nutshell. "It is true that the competitive system has many injustices . . . but the non-competitive system is even worse. The standard is generally much lower, since the teams succumb to the fact that they have no tangible incentive. Over and over again I have heard it said at non-competitive festivals, 'why bother about our stage setting? — we don't get any marks for it' and so on in other departments." Competitive festivals do seem to bring the best performances and there is no doubt that they attract the biggest audiences!

Festival work in Britain is now back almost to pre-war standards, for it was in 1939 that drama festivals reached their peak of popularity. These festivals fall into two main groups, those organized by the British Drama League, and the independent festivals. The British Drama League Community Theatre Festival, to give it its full title, was first held in 1925. It is for one-act plays. A preliminary festival in the spring attracted only seven entries, but there were fifty entries at another held in the autumn of the same year. The festival rapidly grew in popularity until in 1937 there were 747 entries. In Scotland, the Scottish Community Drama Association run a similar festival and this grew from thirty odd entries in 1927 to over 300 ten years later. This year there is a record entry of 432. The B.D.L. and the S.C.D.A. festivals are run on the knock-out system. To the National Final, England sends three teams, one each from the Northern, Eastern, and Western Areas, Scotland sends one team and Wales one. The Scottish festival has its own Final, but the team affiliated to the B.D.L. gaining the highest marks also comes forward to the B.D.L. Final. The organization of the B.D.L. festival is in the hands of the Area Committees working through their many Divisional organizations.

It will be helpful to give a concrete example showing how the system works. My own company, The Holme Valley Comedy Players, reached the National Final in 1938. They were placed first of sixteen teams who competed in four festivals held in the West Riding Division of Yorkshire and passed on to the Yorkshire Final. Winning this they rep-

resented Yorkshire at the Northern Area Final and were selected to go forward from this to the National Final, which in 1938 was held in Scotland, but which is usually held in London. They had to play three times to reach the National Final but had there been Divisional Final the number of performances would have been four, which is the usual number of times a team has to win to reach the National Final. The full-length play festival is now gaining in popularity and in 1946 the B.D.L. organized a National Full-length Play Festival which attracted 189 entries.

The B. D. L. festivals are open to affiliated societies only and they are held between October and May. Although they arouse widespread interest, the fact that they are so long drawn out detracts from their appeal. It was perhaps partly for this reason that the independent festivals came into being. These usually run for a week and have the merit of being quick and decisive. Chief among the independent festivals are those organized by seaside towns and spas as a means of publicity for their social amenities. The Annual Blackpool Drama Festival for One-Act Plays is one of the best examples. It is billed as the premier event of the winter season and brings entries from all over the north of England. I have the syllabus of the 1948 festival in front of me as I write this and I see that twenty-four teams have entered, that four of the plays are original ones and that 200 players are taking part. Then there are the festivals organized by Drama Guilds and Associations. These are usually restricted to affiliated societies, but some are open to all with special classes for members. In addition there are festivals held by Women's Institutes, Townswomen's Guilds, Youth Groups and festivals of Co-operative Drama and Jewish Drama and many others.

The standard of work at the independent festivals, both full-length and one-act, is very high as all the competi-

tors are especially selected from the best societies, who are the only ones who consider it worthwhile to enter. The general standard of the B.D.L. and the S.C.D.A. festivals is naturally much lower for at one extreme you get a village group who may be performing a locally-written play and at the other some highbrow Little Theatre confounding their audience and sometimes themselves with some obscure play. The standard of the best teams, however, in these festivals is as high as those in the independent festivals, which is only natural seeing that they are often the same.

Except for the differences mentioned above all the festivals are run on very much the same lines. A full-length play, or three and sometimes four plays on an evening, is followed by a public adjudication from the stage which is usually both entertaining and instructive. Rules and marking systems vary very little. The B.D.L. sets the standard in the marking system. The markings are: (1) Choice of Play, 10; (2) Stage Presentation, 10; (3) Production, 30; (4) Acting, 40; (5) Dramatic Achievement, 10. What little variation there is to this comes from the independent festivals who try to make a distinction between dramatic achievement, enterprise and choice of play. All festivals stipulate that players must be amateurs and an amateur is defined as a person who has never made acting, play production, or the teaching of elocution his (or her) vocation. Professional producers, however, may be appointed.

In the B. D. L. and S. C. D. A. festivals comedy and drama, etc. are all as one, but the Independent Festivals have separate classes for comedy and drama and sometimes there are other classes such as fantasy. At Blackpool a distinction is made between light comedy and low comedy, dialect plays being included in the latter class. Usually, there are classes for original plays and many festivals have awards for the best individual performances. Trophies, usually in the form of cups,



Performance of *Happy Bride*, a one-act play by George Taylor, at the British Drama League West Riding Festival held at Bradford, February 9, 1948. This performance was given by the Holthirch Amateur Dramatic Society.

are awarded to the winners and are held for a year. Some of the independent festivals also pay prize money, others pay the teams' expenses instead. All the B. D. L. entries compete for a single trophy, the Howard de Walden Cup, but travelling expenses of all teams are paid and in cases where the income justifies it, other expenses as well. Practically, all the festivals pay the acting fees on the plays performed.

Drama festivals are held in all kinds of buildings from converted school-rooms to elaborately equipped theatres. The Independent Festivals are usually held in theatres where the stage facilities are usually of the best. Morecambe provides properly built sets for all the plays in the Royalty Theatre and one year at Blackburn, Lancashire, all the teams had sets built to their own specifications. The D.B.L. rules stipulate that all the festival plays shall be played in a curtain surround and that door, window and fireplace flats, special fittings and all properties shall be provided by the competing teams.

Because of the wide variation in the halls and staging facilities, there is not the high standard of setting that there is at the independent festivals. Sometimes the stages are big as shown in the photograph and consequently an ordinary livingroom looks bare, especially as the curtain set does not allow much dressing of the stage. In cases like this all the emphasis is placed on the performance, it is virtually "bare boards and a passion." In the case of the performance illustrated it was the acting and the play which carried the day, for in the words of a critic and the adjudicator, "the bare living-room was vested with personality both by the 'props' and the players and the show touched the genius of simplicity." But even large stages and plain curtains can be transformed by cleverly placed pieces of furniture and by concentrating lighting.

At the national finals at the Scala Theatre last year the producers had so much imagination with their settings that I quite overlooked the fact that I was actually witnessing plays being played in a curtain surround. In the 1938 finals which were held in Glasgow the winning play was *Count Albany*, performed by the London Midland Bank Dramatic Society which deals with the later life of that romantic figure in British history, Bonnie Prince Charlie. It won because the producer had realized the possibilities of stage lighting allied to beautiful costumes and simple stage furniture. The play was set in the usual curtains, but with the help of a few high-backed chairs, a large table and a couple of tall lamps, the huge stage of the Theatre Royal, Glasgow was, with the aid of controlled lighting, filled with splendour.

Drama Festivals in Britain do bring out all that is best in stagecraft, and call for ingenuity in production and sincere and beautiful acting.

Cain Park Theatre

A Municipal Theatre Founded by a High School Dramatics Club

By DINA REES EVANS

Director of Dramatics, Heights High School, Cleveland Heights, Ohio

FIFTEEN years ago in Cleveland Heights, Ohio, a ravine in its natural state cut through the city and only bird lovers and small boys braved the tangle of squirrel haunted bushes or dabbled in the smelly stream. Today in that same ravine, a beautiful big open-air theatre has become the play ground of adults and children alike and the center of the community's summer entertainment. How did this miracle happen? The story begins with a high school dramatics club, the Heights Players, now Troupe 410 of The National Thespian Society.

In June of 1934 the Players, together with an adult group known as the Civic Theatre, chose that neglected ravine as a picturesque spot for the presentation of Shakespeare's *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM* and on opening night dedicated it as Cain Park in honor of Frank C. Cain, who served as Mayor of Cleveland Heights for thirty-six years. So inspired was Mayor Cain by this joint artistic endeavor of high school and community theatre lovers that he, then and there, decided to build in that ravine a Greek-like amphitheatre to serve as a cultural playground such as Pericles had provided the citizens of Athens centuries ago. And that is how it came about.

In August, 1938, Cain Park Theatre opened its gates as the first municipally-owned and operated theatre in America. Its avowed purpose was to provide wholesome entertainment for old and young at the lowest possible cost, to serve as an outlet for the talented folk of the community, and to become a training ground for young people interested in the arts of the theatre. The management was placed by the city in the hands of three high school teachers. The writer, who is the sponsor of Heights Players, is known as the Supervising Director, William R. Winters is General Manager, and Gerard L. Gentile is Technical Director. These teachers still constitute the administrative staff, though the list of employees has grown from three to nearly one hundred and includes directors, actors, singers, dancers, technical crews, teachers, and office staff. The activities have expanded but the spirit still remains one of simple, friendly community cooperation in the honest production of good theatre.

What is the theatre like? The open-air auditorium seats 3000 people; the stage, eighty feet wide and as many feet deep, is big enough to present huge spectacles and small enough for the most intimate dramas. Across the rear of the auditorium, sheltered by a solid roof, runs a large pavillion known as the Colonnade. It is here that the teen-agers gather each summer day, as you will hear later in this story. At the left of the auditorium is another covered area called the Terrace, a general meeting place where hot noon lunches are served

at cost to the many people who during the season work at the theatre all day and often well into the night. There are office buildings, dressing rooms, rehearsal areas—all the "spaces" a producing theatre must have and many more are being planned by the city for future construction. For the project has been a success and has grown steadily from its humble beginning, with the total attendance of 3000 in 1938 becoming in 1945, 1946 and 1947 almost 100,000 people, an average of ten thousand each week.

What sort of program does the theatre offer? Opening the last week in June and running for ten weeks until near the end of August, a new bill appears each week, playing from Tuesday right through Saturday. Plays alternate with musical comedies, serious drama with farce. The aim is a balance that will satisfy the varied tastes of all the members of a family. The pattern of the ten weeks schedule is now five plays and five musical comedies or operettas, *Elizabeth the Queen*, *Peer Gynt*, *Mary of Scotland*, *Journey's end*, *The Moon Is Down*, *Harriet*, *Right You Are If You Think You Are*, *In Time to Come* and *Dream Girl* have appealed to adult tastes; *Abie's Irish Rose*, *She Loves Me Not*, *Arsenic and Old Lace*, *Janie*, *Green Grow the Lilacs* have offered escape entertainment; *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Macbeth*, *Cradle Song*, and *School for Husbands* have pleased the artistic; while the crowds have jammed the theatre to hear the popular tunes in *Knickerbocker Holiday*, *Of The I Sing*, *Vagabond King*, *H. M. S. Pinafore*, *Sweethearts*, *Babes in Toyland*, *Naughty Marietta*, and *Sing Out Sweet Land*. These are only a few titles selected at random from the list of some eighty productions presented during the past ten years. The 1948 season's schedule will be announced as this issue of DRAMATICS comes from the press.

Who does the work of the theatre? In the beginning the staff depended upon volunteers for casting the plays and building the sets. As the program grew and the standard of production became more exacting, it became necessary to bring in people trained in theatre who could devote full time to their jobs. These professionally-trained, but non-union, non-Equity people are drawn from the teaching staffs of college drama departments and from community theatres. Their sincere intelligent approach to Theatre with a capital "T" has made Cain Park much more like a college campus than a straw-hat theatre. The roster of directors who have consistently raised the standards of production include such names as Sydney H. Spayde of the Dock Street Theatre, Newell Tarrant of the Erie Play House, John Hulburt from Allegheny College, Edward Wright from Denison University, Theodore Viehman and Ben Henneke from Tulsa, Oklahoma, Paul Randall from Philadelphia, Bernard Szold from Hollywood, and Alan Schneider from Theatre, Inc., Broadway.

The big sets on the open-air stage present challenging problems and these problems have been solved by Girard Gentile, assisted by such well known designers as Lee Mitchell from Northwestern, Vern Adi from the University of Utah, Harold Mantz from Pennsylvania State Teachers College, Walter Russell now with the Indianapolis Civic Theatre and Viktor Schreckengost, Cleveland Artist. Mrs. Graham Gloster Bird from the theatre staff of Allegheny College is now general art director, working with Mr. Gentile in designing the sets and harmonizing costumes and props to attain a unified effect. The new sets which are built and painted for each week's show require skillful and experienced crews. Lighting under the stars is very different from illuminating an indoor stage where no moon ever intrudes, and voices must be amplified to carry over the sound of chirping crickets to the back row two hundred and thirty-five feet away. Professor John Hulburt supervises both the lights and the sound system. Watching the mechanical operation of the theatre is often more exciting than sitting out front for the artistic results. The Hollywood-like sets roll in on "dollies", the light crew throws switches in the booth at the right of the auditorium, the sound man twirls the buttons on his dial as he sits at his control board clear at the rear of the audience, and then a hand touches a button and the curtain of lights that have protected the stage from the eyes of the audience sinks into the evergreen hedge which rims the stage, and the show is on.

Isn't there some place for the high school and college student in this thrillingly active theatre? Of course there is, and for the little youngsters, too. Let us begin with Children's Theatre. The whole western end of the Park belongs to the juniors. A tented area, with a quaint office building attached, serves as general headquarters, where director Kenneth L. Graham may be found in a swirl of activity created by his staff of twenty teachers with their assistants and two hundred and fifty children, all eagerly intent on creating theatre at childhood level. Everyone belongs to a class in creative dramatics, and in addition may choose two other classes selected from Speech Games, Rhythms, Choral Speaking, Creative Dance, Stagecraft, Puppetry, and Radio. Mr. Graham, who has his B. A. from the University of Iowa, his M. A. from Northwestern and his Ph. D. from the University of Utah and his military service as an officer in the Navy, draws his staff of trained teachers from all over the United States and has built during his five years a children's school and theatre that itself alone justifies the maintenance of Cain Park Theatre as a municipal institution. A junior season of alternating plays and puppet shows with five performances a week provides the children with eight weeks of entertainment.

Now what about opportunities for high school students? Yes, there is a teen-age school which meets daily on the Colonnade to study the art of the theatre under the guidance of highly trained teachers. The director of this



This scene occurred in the production of **Peter Pan** given at the Cain Park Theatre, with Kenneth L. Graham directing. The setting was designed by Lee Mitchell.

school is Eugene S. Davis, well-known instructor in dramatics at Glenville High School in Cleveland and author of two recent textbooks, *Amateur Theatre Handbook* and *Eight Popular Plays for Amateurs in Prompt Book Style*. Mr. Davis and his staff offer courses in Acting, Interpretation, Voice and Diction, Body Mechanics, Radio, and Stagecraft. The school presents its own schedule of plays in the junior season and its students frequently have the opportunity of participating in radio and puppet plays; sometimes they even play extras on the main stage. The enrollment is limited to ninety, and competition is keen for admission. Naturally, the majority of lucky members come from Heights High, Glenville High, and Shaker Heights High, but last summer thirty-four different high schools had representation in the senior or teen-age school. Many of these young people were National Thespians and one of the unexpected results of the summer has been the growth of a fraternal spirit among the dramatic students of the Greater Cleveland high schools which shows not only in social friendship but in attendance of each other's major school productions.

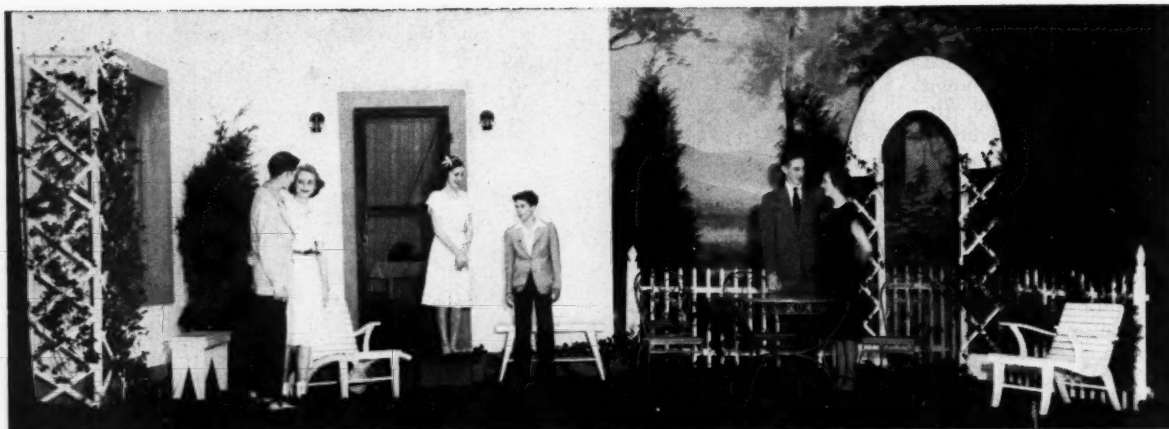
The Cain Park Teen-age School of the Theatre is open to high school students from any part of the country. One girl last year came from Albany, New York; another from Cincinnati, Ohio. Already applications have come in from distant cities for the 1948 season. The tuition fee is only fifteen dollars for the seven weeks which begin June 21 and end August 6. Rooms may be rented in homes adjacent to the Park. Students will be accepted on the basis of their school records and the recommendation of their teachers. For young people seriously interested in the arts of the theatre, Cain Park offers a summer of instructive basic experience.

What about the people still in college? They may come to Cain Park as ap-

prentices. The novices pay no fee and, of course, are not paid for their services. They are assigned to the field of their choice. The Children's School and the Puppet Theatre offer a rare opportunity to college students who wish to learn to teach and direct children or to make and manipulate hand puppets or marionettes. The latter work is directed by the nationally known puppeteer, Helen Haiman Joseph. Other apprentices may prefer to paint or build scenery or work with the costumes or prop crews, while still others elect the acting company where they often win minor roles and bit parts in the major productions.

Singers and dancers, too, have an opportunity at Cain Park. Early in the spring two choral groups go into rehearsal for the musical comedies under the batons of Handel Wadsworth and John Howard Tucker. Just as soon as the Metropolitan Opera season closes, Tyda Morse, captain of the Opera Ballet, will hurry to Cleveland Heights to organize her dancers for the 1948 season's program that will certainly include *BLOSSOM TIME*, *B'YES IN TOYLAND*, *CHIMES OF NORMANDY*, *LADY IN THE DARK*, and *LUTE SONG*. The big open-air amphitheatre is especially adapted for the presentation of musical shows, which frequently play to standing room only.

So this is the story of how a high school Thespian Troupe became the proud parent of a full-grown theatre. The parent constantly feeds new talent to the city's theatre and the city in turn gives training and experience to the young Thespians. Eventually, Cleveland Heights will grow its own crop of actors, directors, dancers, singers, teachers and technicians. Then the cycle will be complete and a city will really own its own theatre — for the people and by the people. Cleveland Heights is a better place to live in because it has Cain Park Theatre.



Scene from a production of **HOME SWEET HOMICIDE** at the Young High School (Thespians Troupe 415), Knoxville, Tenn. Directed by Mariam E. Garrett.

Responsibility of Our School Theatres

By JAMES SANDOE

University of Colorado Libraries, Boulder, Colorado

IT is a curious and depressing commentary upon our capacity as teachers that most students regard the "classics" not with affectionate delight but with an automatic awe. Certainly nothing could dampen any tentative understanding of, say, Shakespeare more than the ancient but still tenacious habit of teachers to require their students to learn one of the famous speeches. My own grisliest recollection of the classroom is the monotonous if nervous repetition, fifty times over in one gloomy morning, of Macbeth's "Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow . . .". And this blank and meaningless exercise of the mechanics of memory is an abysmal indication of any teacher's own failure not merely to transmit the greatness or the poignant immediacy of Shakespeare, but of the teacher's failure to understand the playwright in his simplest, theatrical sense.

For it is as clear, apparently, as it is difficult to understand that Shakespeare's plays were written to be acted. And yet, while the students in our classrooms spend so many minutes, so many hours for so many weeks, following the plays on the printed page, they make their escape from the classroom and go into the school theatre for a very different sort of exercise.

The school theatre may make an occasional, possibly even an annual (if it is almost dangerously enterprising) bow to the classics, but the staple of its diet has nothing to do with the only concern of the classroom. For the school theatre feeds upon plays which, in overwhelming measure, make no faint pretense to distinction except as they crowd each other for position as dramatic nadir.

THIS is the consequence of a great many pressures and it is thoroughly deplorable and frightening static state

of affairs. The director in the school theatre is not always properly trained and so feels diffident on that account. The director in the school theatre is not always (not perhaps even often) given time among his duties in which to rehearse a play. He must instead accept the play as a chore upon other duties and so scamp it out as best he can. The director in the school theatre is often himself unconvinced about the great plays, and is content, therefore, to allow the absurd dichotomy of classroom and stage without examining its absurdity.

Now it is my belief that the school theatre has only the most casual excuse for existing unless it accepts a much more serious and responsible reason: to illustrate and prove the still-theoretical argument of the classroom. And that, to me, implies a schedule of production for the school theatre that would devote itself entirely (or nearly so) to the production of good plays.

Even a very capable reader has difficulty in making a stage of his mind's eye to play out the play as he reads it on the printed page. At most, the student in the classroom emerges from his reading with a fuzzy and imperfect knowledge of matters which, on a stage in performance, explain themselves effortlessly and lastingly. The classroom, indeed, should come *after* the theatre and when discussion is armed and understanding stimulated.

Most directors will exclaim in anguish that the classics present a host of practical difficulties. They require, many of them, not one neat and conventional setting but half a dozen; they require costumes which are costly; they require, usually, far more men than women when the natural order of things presents the director with players in reverse ratio.

All of this being true in one degree or another, the answer to nearly all of the problems is that the plays present a challenge to the director's imagination. Women's colleges do their Shakespeare with all-female casts and often do very well indeed. And one thing the classroom has taught steadily is that the Globe used for all its diversity of settings, a conventional and rather impassive background. Shakespeare in modern dress is scarcely a novelty and the textbooks show us that the sense of historical costume is a latter-day innovation, a notion that seized actors and managers long after Garrick played Macbeth in a tie-wig and knee-breeches.

THE older plays are often long for a modern production (although we all sit through double bills at the films without any difficulty) and cutting the plays is to the uninitiated a fearful mystery. To be sure there are cuttings available, and sound ones. And many an act or scene stands — like the hilarious Pyramus and Thisbe play in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* — almost self-contained already.

Still the burden of inexperience stands as a powerful deterrent even when the responsibility has been admitted. Might it not, for that reason, be practicable to establish some sort of central bureau to which the more experienced director might submit his working script with notes on costumes and scenery, lighting and cutting, with sketches and with pictures? A bureau to which the inexperienced director might apply for a list of such scripts, for the notes which will answer his questions and soothe his fears in showing how another director solved the same problem? No experienced director cares to be bound by precedent, but many directors will welcome the help and the stimulation of others' experience.

This seems to me one way by which the school theatre might implement what I cannot but regard as its most serious and its most delightful responsibility. Whether this particular panacea is practicable depends entirely upon the directors who would establish and maintain it.

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By LEE SHERMAN



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Say You Saw It In *Dramatics Magazine*

THEATRE ON BROADWAY

By PAUL MYERS

264 Lexington Ave., New York City

Readers of this magazine may order tickets for Broadway plays through Mr. Myers. Request should be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

A mere handful of productions are scheduled to open before the conclusion of the theatre season of 1947-48. It has been, in actual achievements, a disappointing season. When the various prize-giving committees assemble during the next few weeks, only a sparse number of possible winners will be put up for consideration. As I see it, Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire*; Joshua Logan and Thomas Heggen's dramatization of the latter's *Mister Roberts*; Oscar Hammerstein, II and Richard Rodgers' *Allegro*; Jan de Hartog's *Skipper Next to God* and Ruth and Augustus Goetz' adaptation of Henry James' *The Heiress* make up the entire panel. While other plays of some merit have been produced during the season, most of the remaining bright spots have been provided by the revival of old plays or by the personal contribution of an individual. One can immediately see wherein the greatest weakness of our theatre lies.

The Linden Tree

Of the new plays which have come along since last I reported, J. B. Priestley's *The Linden Tree* seemed to be of the greatest merit. Produced with considerable success in London, the play closed here after its seventh performance. Mr. Priestley's philosophical excursions into the realm of the theatre have failed to win wide approval here for some little time. The pleasant comedies of his earlier years were successful — *The Good Companions*, *Laburnum Grove*. In 1932, *Dangerous Corner* succeeded because of the novelty of its dramatic device. This fact accounts, largely, for the moderately successful run enjoyed by *An Inspector Calls* earlier this season. His series of plays which were inspired by an interest in time theories, failed upon production in the United States during the late thirties.

In *The Linden Tree*, the dramatist focused his attention upon contemporary England. Professor Linden reluctantly faces retirement. His wife and children, his associates and servant are given opportunity to air their views. The play is an attempt to interpret England to itself and, secondarily, to the rest of the world. Mr. Priestley sees something fine emerging from the present shortages, post-war disillusionment and weariness. His optimism is vastly encouraging and his play, as the expression and justification of his mood,

warrants more consideration than was shown it.

Boris Karloff broke away from his bogey-man roles to enact Professor Linden. The excellent supporting cast included Barbara Everest, Uno O'Connor and Viola Keats. The play was directed by George Schaeffer and produced by Maurice Evans.

You Never Can Tell

One of the few boons of the present new play shortage has been the opportunity to see some of the great, but rarely produced, plays. Those of us who are fond of the plays of Shaw have been particularly fortunate this season with the aforementioned Maurice Evans' production of *Man and Superman*, the Dublin Gate Theatre Players' staging of *John Bull's Other Island*, the Equity-Library Theatre's creditable attempts with *Fanny's First Play* and *Candida*. Now the Theatre Guild, in association with Alfred Fischer, has offered a delightful production of one of the early comedies, *You Never Can Tell*.

Shaw has rarely been as devastatingly charming as he is in this play. Laughter bubbles underneath even its most serious passages and, occasionally, its rollicking mood becomes almost boisterous. The characters are immediately recognizable as Shavian creations — the mother, an advanced thinker on the subject of women's rights and child training; the daughter, a diligent disciple trained to carry on her parent's work; the impecunious idealist hero; the gruff, conservative villain and the genial, all-seeing, philosophical waiter. William moves noisily throughout most of the play, tying the threads of the plot together. It is not by accident that it is he who iterates the phrase which the dramatist has employed as the play's title.

You Never Can Tell is, briefly, the story of Mrs. Clandon and her three children's return from Madeira to England, of their finding their father and of the elder daughter's romance with the young dentist, Valentine. The plot, however, is only the skeleton upon which Shaw has decked some of his wittiest lines and his deepest (and most engagingly reported) philosophy. The current production is particularly fortunate in having Leo G. Carroll as William and Tom Helmore as the young "ivory-snatcher" — as Dolly refers to the dentist. One felt that Peter Ashmore's direction would have done well

with a bit more accelerated pace, but the Theatre Guild has concluded its season with a very happy flourish.

A Temporary Island

The Experimental Theatre's latest offering was, frankly, rather disappointing. In Halsted Welles' *A Temporary Island*, it was difficult to find any cause for regarding the play as right for production under this set-up. Conservative both in theme and in expression; it was difficult to determine what the board of Experimental Theatre saw in this particular script. The plot, in brief, told of the efforts of a Massachusetts college president to run away and join the circus. There is something about such an idea that appeals to all, but the wide contrast between the accustomed life of President Fisk and that of the people of the circus would seem to be dramatically interesting. Mr. Welles' play did not exploit this interest, nor did it catch the circus flavor as successfully as such a play as Andreyev's *He Who Gets Slapped*.

It is always a pleasure to see Philip Bourneuf, and with modified handling the role of Professor Fish could become a great one in his hands. Vera Zorina, Ernest Truex, and Leon Askin figured among the circus personnel. The play was staged by the author, the settings by Lawrence Goldwasser.

Hedda Gabler

Hedda Gabler was the second of two Ibsen plays offered by Louis J. Singer and the American Repertory Theatre in an abortive attempt to revive the organization locally. Though more favorably received than the earlier *Ghosts*; I felt that the second production was less successful. The play didn't seem to be able to shake off a certain mustiness. It just did not come alive.

Translated and directed by Eva LeGallienne; the production of necessity bore comparison with the brilliant one of Mme. Nazimova not very many seasons ago. Miss LeGallienne is among the foremost actresses of Ibsen in the modern theatre, but her recent *Hedda* lacked credibility and humanity. The supporting cast did little to rescue the production from its lethargy. It is dispiriting to see so fine an idea as the American Repertory Theatre go down in this fashion. Let us hope that the Misses LeGallienne and Webster will soon be represented by a production of their accustomed standard.

Tonight at 8:30

One of the gayest memories of the season of the 1936-37 season was the appearance of Gertrude Lawrence and Noel Coward in the nine one-act plays of Mr. Coward's which bore the collective title, *Tonight at 8:30*. When that engagement closed because of Coward's illness, the demand of the public was



Scene from the last act of Shaw's comedy, *You Never Can Tell*, which opened on Broadway on March 16, with Peter Ashmore as director. Settings and costumes by Stewart Chaney.

as vociferous as at the beginning of its vastly successful run. Recently, one of the plays served as the starting point for the splendid British film, *Brief Encounter*. We were considerably pleased, therefore, upon receipt of the news that Miss Lawrence had opened an engagement in two sets of the playlets, and that she was heading in our direction. Though Mr. Coward was not appearing with her; he had directed the production and revised some of the plays to keep them fresh and pertinent.

The actuality was terribly disappointing. Of course one's memory dresses up recollection of great evenings in the theatre. One cannot guard against that. *Tonight at 8:30* a bit over a decade later, however, seemed like a very serious effort to be amusing. Perhaps the different years between have sobered us. The domestic troubles of a second-class family may seem more tragic to us than an opportunity for fun; the luxury of Victoria and Simon Gayforth in *Shadow Play* may seem more transient.

Graham Payn made his initial appearance in the United States in most of the roles first enacted by Noel Coward. The rest of Miss Lawrence's supporting cast included Philip Tonge, Norah Howard, Valerie Cossart, Sarah Burton and Booth Coleman.

Musical Show

Nancy Walker is one of the phenomenon of the American musical stage which baffles evaluation. She is hard, lacking in the type of figure and looks generally considered prerequisites, without a singing voice, graceless. She is, nevertheless, one of the funniest comedienness to have come forward of recent years.

Her Brunhilde Esterhazy in *On the Town* is a high spot of recent musical production. Her latest role is one created just for her talents.

In *Look, Ma, I'm Dancin'*, Miss Walker appears as Lily Malloy, a distinctly untalented ballerina whose money enables her to buy herself a ballet troupe. One can see immediately the great comedy possibilities — the opportunity for satire, the ability to make theatrical use of the current unprecedented boom in ballet-going.

It is to be feared that some of this opportunity has been lost. That is not to say that I did not have a good time at the musical, but much more could have been done with it. The idea was conceived by Jerome Robbins whose ballet, *Fancy Free*, served as the basis of the aforementioned, *On the Town*. George Abbot, the producer and director of the earlier triumph served in a similar capacity. The music and lyrics were contributed by Hugh Martin; the book by Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee. The supporting cast included Alice Pearce, Tommy Rall, Don Liberto, Harold Lang, Janet Reed, and Katherine Servaga from the field of ballet.

For Love Or Money

The charm of June Lockhart is largely responsible for the success of F. Hugh Herbert's *For Love Or Money*. The play is one of those seemingly prefabricated jobs, which Mr. Herbert has been sending our way from Hollywood with great regularity. This one is neither better nor worse than the others, but June Lockhart's acting job does much to make it seem very much better. John Loder, Vicki Cummings and Mark O-

HOW THEY WERE STAGED

Edited by Earl W. Blank, Berea College

An amazing source of information for directors in schools, colleges, and community theatres. Contains a complete discussion on the actual casting, directing, costuming, advertising and staging of each of the following outstanding plays chosen for their suitability for amateur theatre groups: *Junior Miss*, *Arsenic and Old Lace*, *What a Life*, *Stage Door*, *Two On An Island*, *Ladies in Retirement*, *Zaraguetta*, *Everyman*, *Boston Blues*, *The Green Vine*, *The Imaginary Invalid*, *The Eve of St. Mark*, *Lost Horizon*, *Sun-Up*, *Icebound*, *The Importance But the Truth*, *For Her C-h-e-ild's Sake*, *Kind of Being Earnest*, *The Torch-Bearers*, *Nothing Lady*, *Three Cornered Moon*, *The Trail of the Lonesome Pine*, *Charley's Aunt*, *Tish*, *The Out of the Frying Pan*, *Snow White and the Fighting Little*, *Captain Applejack*, *Skidding*, *Seven Dwarfs*, *Green Stockings*, *Seven Keys to Baldpate*, *Peter Pan*, *Lavender and Old Lace*, *Outward Bound*, *Candida*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Moor Born*, *Murder in a Nunnery*, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *The Cradle Song*, *Family Portrait*, *Death Takes a Holiday*, and *Letters to Lucerne*.

The National Thespian Society
College Hill Station — Cincinnati, Ohio

Daniels support her under the direction of Harry Ellerbe.

Review's Awards

Since this is to be the final review for the season, I would like the opportunity to make my own awards for outstanding achievement. The award for the best play of the season, I would present to Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire*. For reason of its scope, its characterization, its revealing of a dominant note in society today, its stage effect — it seems to loom above all of the other new entries of the season. Judith Anderson's *Medea* in the play of the name is unquestionably the outstanding achievement among the actresses of the season. The award on the male side seems more difficult — several seem outstanding: Marlon Brando in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Leo G. Carroll in John Van Druieten's *The Druid Circle*, Thomas Mitchell in J. B. Priestley's *An Inspector Calls*. If forced, I should decide (after considerable consideration) upon the first named.

A special citation must be made to Oscar Hammerstein II and Richard Rodgers for their valiant pioneering in musical expression with *Allegro*. Just as their world-famous *Oklahoma* set an entirely new note in musical comedy production, their offering of this season will continue to have a very important effect. One would like to thank Katharine Cornell for bringing Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* to us so glowingly and magnificently staged, Maurice Evans for dusting off Shaw's *Man and Superman*. We are very grateful for the performances given by the Dublin Gate Theatre Company and the D'Oyly Carte Gilbert and Sullivan troupe. It was pleasant to see such actors as Henry Fonda, John Garfield, Boris Karloff, James Stewart forsake the west coast cinema studios and appear in the living theatre. All of these, plus the less apparent labors of hundreds of artists and laborers, go to make up the indescribable magic of the theatre.

THE FILM OF THE MONTH

By H. KENN CARMICHAEL
Department of Drama, Los Angeles City College,
Los Angeles, California.

This department is designed to direct attention to the outstanding motion pictures of the 1947-48 season. Suggestions for future discussions are welcomed by the Department Editor.

THE TREASURE OF THE SIERRA MADRE

SOME readers may have seen Warner Brothers' *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* by the time this reaches print. Those who have not will be repaid in their effort to catch it on first or return showings. Here is a moving and simple story told in vigorous and direct terms — its theme stated bluntly at the beginning, illustrated dramatically in the action, and crystallized sharply in the climax.

It is 1920 in Tampico, Mexico, when we meet Dobbs, an American on the bum. He is dirty, unshaven, hot and shabby, cadging dimes and cigarettes from tourists. Shortly, Dobbs meets Curtin, a chap who is in the same business. Pickings are so lean in Tampico that the two finally resort to taking jobs in a construction camp; a bad idea, it turns out, when their employer decamps with their salaries. When Dobbs takes a portion of a winning lottery ticket from an unchained vendor, the transaction nets him a hundred or so dollars. He adds this to the salary he finally removes by force from his fleet-footed boss, in order to join Curtin and an older man in a gold-hunting expedition in the mountainous country of Mexico.

Walter Huston plays the part of the old-timer, Howard who guides Dobbs and Curtin to the treasure in the mountains. He is a philosophical old gent who tries to placate the two when cabin fever and gold fever set in. He fails, and therein lies the story.

The Treasure of the Sierra Madre was directed by Walter Huston's son, John, who directed *The Maltese Falcon* and *In This Our Life*. John wasn't squeamish about directing his father. "I did it before on Broadway," he says. "During that time I found out what a swell trouser the old boy is. When we work together it's strictly professional. I'm the director and he takes orders like anyone else."

Tim Holt, who plays Curtin, was on loan to Warners by RKO. He virtually has his own western outfit at the Gower Street plant, where he keeps busy making a long list of Zane Grey stories. He was last at Warners ten years ago as a young buckaroo in *Gold Is Where You Find It*, starring Olivia de Havilland, George Brent, and Claude Rains. He works hard during the week at filmmaking, and on week-ends at ranching on his acreage near Victorville, Cali-

fornia. He works out daily in the gym to keep fit for his riding and fighting roles. "Western pictures," he has said, "are the bread and butter, the backbone and the best branch of the whole business, mainly because you have new audiences every five to seven years."

Humphrey Bogart again plays a bad man, this time Dobbs, a man driven to violence and evil by possession of the gold he pans. The story had long attracted Bogart, who, with producer Henry Blanke and director John Huston, established a sort of watch over it until the day when they could actually go to work. The tale waited until John Huston's release from the armed forces.

Howard, as played by Huston, is a man serene in the knowledge that, given the right digging tools, ammunition and guns for bandits, and two such companions as Dobbs and Curtin, a fortune can be taken from the Mexican hills. He tries to warn the other two men of the dangers ahead, principal of which will be their greed and their distrust of each other should they hit pay dirt. His talk falls on deaf ears as Dobbs and Curtin eagerly eye the main chance — gold and lots of it. Their hard trip begins, marked by a surface friendship and small talk. During the trek their train is unsuccessfully ambushed by bandits whose leader, Gold Hat, is destined to become the agent of fate — or heaven — near the end of the tale. While the three men are making the tortuous trip through swamps and

underbrush to their final destination, the first signs of bitterness appear, with Dobbs leading the bickering. The tension is increased when the men discover gold and strike it rich. Dobbs must be repeatedly cooled by the other men as he falsely accuses them of coveting his gold.

Art director John Hughes travelled 8,000 miles in Mexico to find the right locale for the story. During his air tour below the border he visited countless villages of the interior, noting customs, background, and terrain as he went. Hughes and director John Huston, who accompanied him, decided on the high, mountainous country surrounding Jungapoo, a tiny village, and the resort of Jose de Purna, as best fitted for the mapor part of the filming.

Hughes' principal task was the combination of a series of exteriors — cantinas, plazas, squares, stores, and hotels — into a cohesive, related street scene at the studio. He did this by on-the-scene study and by reference to a file of some 6,000 photographs taken for the purpose. As a result, any sequence begun in Mexico by the troupe could, if necessary, be continued at the company's Burbank studios in almost identical surroundings. For example, all establishing and long shots of the ambushing of a train in mountainous Mexican country could be completed in closeups and semi-closeups at the studio, where even the terrain could be produced.

Considerable time and attention were given also to studying the physical set-up of Tampico and the types of people inhabiting it. Oil wells south of the city were reproduced on the studio's "Thirty Acres" location site, near the sound stages themselves. Mining operations in the mountains of Mexico were observed with an eye to reproducing the open shafts and interiors. The picture's second principal location site, near Kernville, California, was the setting for much of the actual mining, the land bearing a strikingly similarity to that below the border. A thorough study was made of this region for possible reproduction by Hughes of the same scenes at the studios.

THE story of the three men takes a sharp turn when their camp is visited by a strange American who refuses to leave, demanding a share of the profits. He is about to be dispatched when the camp is invaded by Gold Hat and his band of bandits. During the fight the stranger is killed and the bandits scattered. The country is getting a little too hot for the miners. They decide to call it a day — they have been preoccupied with the business of accumulating gold for ten months — and to head for civilization. The trip becomes a nightmare because of the fortune each man carries and

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Mention Dramatics Magazine



Scene from the film, *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*, directed by John Huston for Warner Brothers. Standing with clenched fist is Humphrey Bogart as Dobbs; seated and facing Bogart is Walter Huston as Howard.

his distrust for the others. Again it is Dobbs who is the trouble-maker, and old man Howard the soother. Enroute down the mountain the three are overtaken by friendly Indians who tell of a dying boy in their camp. Old Howard pulls the lad through and the Indians make him a virtual prisoner as their own medicine man, leaving Dodds and Curtin to go it alone.

Walter Huston was 63 the day the troupe left for Mexico. No youngster, he might have complained about the hardships his role handed him. "I'm a little too old to scamper up and down trails in the heat of the day, but if it's in the script then I'll do it." And he did, demonstrating one more his qualities as a troupier. After those mountain sequences, the ten-day location near Kernville, California, proved somewhat anti-climatic, although some of the film's most important scenes were filmed there. But the strenuous work was not over. Back at the studio the company found awaiting it a replica of one of the smaller mountains in Mexico. Constructed of more than sixty tons of earth, with a woods of living and simulated trees, the set occupied by more than 300 cast and crew to aid in the recreation of the bandit attack on the mining camp.

As the story reaches its climax, the friction between Dobbs and Curtin leads to gun play. Giving Curtin up for dead, Dobbs goes on alone, with all the treasure in his possession. His troubles on the trail multiply, and he is finally slain by Gold Hat and his boys who rip open the saddle bags and unknowingly scatter the gold to the winds. Meanwhile Curtin revives, and he and Howard arrive in an outpost town to hear the story of Dobbs' last encounter

with the bandits — and of Gold Hat's apprehension by the Federales. In returning to the tribe that adopted him Howard tells Curtin, "Laugh, Curtin, old boy. It's a great joke played on us by the Lord or fate or by nature — whichever you prefer. But whoever or whatever played it certainly has a sense of humor. The gold has gone back to where we got it. Laugh, my boy, laugh. It's worth ten months of labor and suffering, this joke is."

During their eight weeks of shooting in Mexico, the American crew were delighted with the efficiency and co-operation shown by the Mexican technicians. From their first cameraman to their grips, the Mexicans showed skills in motion picture work that proved an eye-opener to many of the Americans.

Heroine of the trip was pretty blonde Betty Delmont, lone female member of the big crew. As hairdresses, her job was to keep Bogart's hair in proper disarray. She took all the hardships — wind, rain, dust, sun, and reptiles — with the same even temper as the rest of the crew.

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Albuquerque, New Mexico

Henry Blanke, who produced *The Story of Louis Pasteur* and *The Life of Emile Zola*, paid the author of the tale the high compliment of adhering strictly to the book from which the screenplay was made. No author could ask more. Neither Blanke nor Huston, the director, saw or talked with B. Traven, author of *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*. Nor are they likely to, for whoever B. Traven is, he has done a thorough job of staying anonymous.

The Radio Program of the Month

By S. I. SCHARER, Radio Department

New York University, Washington Square, N. Y.

The purpose of this department is to direct attention to the outstanding radio programs on the air during the 1947-48 school year. Comments and suggestion from readers are welcomed by the Department Editor.

CBS DOCUMENTARY UNIT

THE CBS Documentary Unit was formed late in 1946 to bring into focus the emergent problems of a turbulent postwar world. Established on principles unprecedented in radio history, the Documentary Unit in its first year produced a group of powerful and imaginative programs now generally recognized as the most dynamic development in public service broadcasting during 1947.

Based on the urgent need for more incisive, more penetrating examination of our national problems during a crucial period in our history, the conception of the Unit by CBS executives was a bold departure from the patterns of all previous public service programming. Never before had national network relieved a group of its creative craftsmen of all routine program duties and given it but one responsibility — the production of ten to twelve major documentary broadcasts each year. Never before had a network provided the resources to permit such extensive opportunity for travel, unlimited time for investigation, carte blanche to experiment with new techniques. Never before had a network broken the stranglehold of deadlines and instructed a production team to operate without an established schedule — to present its programs only after subject matter had been completely, exhaustively, authoritatively investigated. And never before had a network adopted the policy of scheduling its major public service programs

in prime listening time; if necessary, at the cost of cancelling commercial broadcasts.

The people selected for the Documentary Unit were chosen because of their alertness to public issues, their experience with the documentary form. Working as the nucleus of the new Unit, they would be free to draw at will upon the limitless resources of the network in this country and abroad, and to add to their strength, whenever necessary, from the great reservoir of free-lance talent working in radio.

Selected from *within* CBS were:

ROBERT PEACE HELLER, CHIEF OF THE UNIT: Long a CBS producer, with broad experience in such varied fields as international broadcasts, national economic affairs and veterans' problems, during the closing years of the war, Heller had also acted as chief CBS liaison with the armed forces. In the Army, he helped expand documentary horizons as assistant to Colonel Frank Capra in the writing and production of the famous "Why We Fight" orientation films. His name has been associated with the prize-winning CBS service, "Trans-Atlantic Call" and "Assignment Home," in addition to many special major public service broadcasts.

SAM ABELOW, ASSISTANT TO THE CHIEF OF THE UNIT: Graduate of the class of '39 of Harvard. Majored in English literature and composition. Started as a radio

script writer in Boston. Overseas 2½ years with the 8th Air Force and acted as historian for special OSS project involving a heavy bomb group. Joined CBS October, 1945, as public service specialist in Promotion Department and in October, 1947, became Assistant to the Chief of the Documentary Unit.

ROBERT LEWIS SHAYON, WRITER-DIRECTOR: A veteran on the CBS program staff, long recognized as a creator of new documentary techniques, Shayon had directed some of the network's most important wartime series. He had won renown directing the most famous of the bond-drive broadcasts, "The Land Is Bright." In 1946, he had prepared the first major broadcast on atomic energy, "Operation Crossroads."

RUTH ASHTON, RESEARCHER: An honor graduate of the Missouri School of Journalism, Miss Ashton was drafted into the Unit at its inception as its chief investigator and research assistant.

LANE BLACKWELL, RESEARCHER: Prior to war service, Blackwell had served in the Shortwave Division of CBS, as writer-producer. Commissioned in the United States Navy, he saw extensive service in Europe, the Pacific and Japan. Upon his return, he was assigned to the Unit as a roving researcher and production assistant.

During the first year, the Unit made radio history. It has conceived a new and vital weapon for public service. It has proved that its method of operation is workable and wise. Above all, it has illuminated vital problems with such compelling clarity and force that public response, to a degree never before attained, has taken the form of action, of constructive citizenship, of community mobilization on a broad front.

The CBS Documentary Unit spends an average of six months preparing each broadcast. It frequently sends its writers and researchers thousands of miles to gather its information first hand. It does not hesitate to experiment boldly with new techniques of production, nor to investigate subjects long thought too complex or scientific for the average layman. It does not consider it superfluous to devote as much care and money to the preliminary promotion of its programs as it devotes to planning and production.

The Unit has proof — in the public response to its first group of major broadcasts — that the investment pays off.

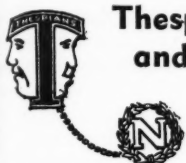
Over and above thousands of letters of commendation, and numerous awards, there is proof in what these programs have meant to people, as guidance and inspiration, and as blueprints for useful action:

"*The Empty Noose*," presented on the evening of the day of the hangings at Nuremberg, so incisively dramatized the meaning of the events for Americans, that CBS switchboards were inundated with telephone calls. Public reaction was so immediate and appreciative that, perhaps for the first time in the history of broadcasting, a major public service program was repeated the very same evening at a later hour.

"*The Eagle's Brood*," casting a searching light on the problems of juvenile delinquency, propelled communities into therapeutic action on a nationwide scale.



Scene for one of the CBS Documentary Unit broadcasts. A number of well known film and radio stars have appeared on these broadcasts.



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"The Sunny Side of the Atom," for the first time by radio, it presented an exhaustive report on the constructive possibilities of atomic science. Commended by government officials and scientists in the atomic field, this broadcast has been adopted by information committees throughout the country as the basic primer of the peacetime aspect of atomic science.

"We Went Back," perhaps the most extensively reportorial project ever undertaken by a network, was an attempt to bring to the American people, two years after the coming of peace, a broad comprehensive picture of the state of this still war-shaken world. Using advanced techniques of on-the-spot recording, integrated with narration and music, the broadcast pioneered in an entirely new field of journalism. Its partner in the venture was THIS WEEK magazine, which devoted its entire issue, the Sunday preceeding the broadcast, to a printed version of the story.

"Fear Begins at Forty," was a sharp indictment of economic waste and human suffering which has resulted from prevalent misconceptions about old age. The program dealt with the tragic problem confronting America's largest age group because of the needless rejection of mature, competent human beings by a society in which they could be both productive and happy instead of unwanted and embittered. The program also tried to correct widespread conceptions and misunderstandings concerning the scientific facts of old age. It revealed that senility should not be any more closely associated with "old age" than rickets with childhood, that although millions are spent on pediatrics a relatively insignificant amount is spent on research for geriatrics, even the most advanced institutional homes for the aged are not designed for living but as nominally comfortable way-stations for the aged; two-thirds of all Americans over 65 are dependent on their children for support; millions of the "aged" who were summoned back to the plants and offices during the war have been forced into unproductive retirement since the war ended, the problems of "old age" are becoming a personal urgency for an ever increasing proportion of the population because of the steady rise in life expectancy for the average Americans.

"Among Ourselves," was a year-end review of race and minority relations in this country during 1947. The program pointed up both the encouraging and discouraging aspects of this important problem as they were revealed during the past year. It dramatized four stirring real-life incidents revealing how racial and minority tensions were successfully resolved in 1947 through the exercise of intelligent good will by individuals and communities. Sketched

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Concluding with a specific blueprint, this broadcast was the direct cause of the formation of special committees in tens of American cities. Its effects were so widely felt, that the Attorney General of the United States has requested that Columbia follow-up this year with a mutual radio-government project to expand the areas of active community participation.

"A Long Life and a Merry One," the result of months of nationwide investigation into all classes of Americans, shocked millions of listeners into the realization that our resources for health were becoming increasingly and alarmingly unavailable to our citizens. In many areas, it stimulated consideration of new plans for medical care.

"Experiment in Living," saw the Unit going behind University walls, to bring to public attention a unique experiment in human relation and democracy, of particular meaning to Americans at this juncture in our history. As a result of this broadcast, hundreds of public and private agencies, community groups, business firms and individuals were brought into contact with a basic new approach to social relations. A large number were encouraged to establish direct contact with the experimenters themselves — the Research Center for Group Dynamics, at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

against these encouraging incidents was the big job that remains to be done.

The four incidents dealt with were those of a Japanese-American war hero whose combat team rescued a lost battalion of Texans in Europe and who found himself the victim of poison-pen letters aimed to drive him off his Texas farm where he had settled after demobilization. The embittered veteran wrote to a local newspaper, recounting his war record and expressing his disappointment that democracy for which he had fought should be denied him. Publication of his letter, accompanied by an editorial, aroused a storm of indignation on his behalf in the country. The second incident was that of the widely publicized incident of the Negro farmer, Harvey Jones, whose money for a raffle ticket was refunded by an Ahoskie, N. C. organization to disqualify him as winner of an automobile, and the injustice corrected when the public became indignant on learning the facts; the third incident was that of an experiment undertaken in California in which school children were brought into direct contact with Mexican-American students from a nearby school, with a resulting loss of prejudice and pre-conceived attitudes. The final episode dramatized the assault upon an American Jew in Iowa which resulted in an intense re-examination of principles by the citizenry, schools, churches and newspapers of the entire state.

THE PLAY OF THE MONTH

Edited by EARL W. BLANK

Director of Dramatics, Berea College, Berea, Kentucky

This department is designed to assist directors, teachers, and students choose, cast and produce plays of recognized merit. Suggestions concerning plays which readers should like to see discussed here will be welcomed by the Department Editor.

STAGING THE BLUE BIRD

By ROBERT BANNISTER

Graduate Director, University of Denver Workshop Theatre

THE BLUE BIRD, by Maurice Maeterlinck. A fantasy, at least 30 principals and as many extras as your particular production calls for.

Introduction

The premiere production of *The Blue Bird* was given in the Artistic Theatre of Moscow on September 30, 1908. In December, 1909, it was produced at the Hay Market Theatre, London. The New York production followed that October, and it was not until March, 1911, that the play was seen in Paris at the Theatre Pajane. It has been a favorite of the films, both in the silent and talking versions for many years.

The American premiere was given at the New Theatre, New York City, on October 1, 1910.

Suitability

The play itself is one of the most suitable that could be given in high schools, colleges or community theatres, as it serves as entertainment for both old and young alike. There is nothing within the play so far as content is concerned that need be cut. The play does need considerable trimming because of its length. The scenes used by the director would depend on the purpose of the director in translating the author's intent.

Plot

The Blue Bird is a play about two children of a poor peasant. The children are visited by an aged fairy who tells them that they must somewhere find the Blue Bird of Happiness. Advising the children of all possible places

it may be found, she sends the children out to look for it. She gives the boy a little green hat with a diamond at the front. When he turns the diamond he can see things before him as they really are. To prove this she brings forth the souls of Cat, Light, Sugar, Fire, Water, Bread, Milk, and Dog, who go forth on the mission; but wherever they find the Blue Bird, it loses color as they grasp it. Sometimes it dies on sight. At last they return home and their mother wakes them up. A neighbor looking much like the fairy asks the little boy for the bird to give to her little girl who is very ill. The little boy discovers that his bird is quite blue and that for which he roamed the universe for had been at home all the time. But even as he gives it to the little girl, who is ill, he loses grasp of the Blue Bird and it flutters away.

Casting

The casting problems for a play of this type are rather difficult, for most of the characters are things and animals rather than the usual type of humans that are generally portrayed on the stage. The use of children may be an added problem but this can be worked out. Since this particular production was a college presentation, the children were portrayed by college students and the illusion of youth proved most satisfactory. In this particular version there was an added problem. This play being done as an experiment for the Lyric Theatre medium, it was necessary that

the entire cast be able to dance or be able to lend themselves to dance movement. This problem is not necessary, however, if a more realistic treatment is used.

Directing

The mood of the play is one of a wistful nature. It is a play of imagination from the outset, whether it is played on a realistic level or whether it is done in a more lyrical style. In my opinion, this play can best be presented keeping the lyrical elements in mind. It is a production that simply asks for music and dance. Ravel and Debussy are suggested for the major part of the music background, for they in many of their works seem to capture the delicate feeling of this play.

In the version that this director used there were eight scenes. The tempo for these scenes ran as follows:

- Scene 1
The wood-cutter's Cottage
Medium to medium fast
- Scene 2
The Fairy's Palace
Medium fast
- Scene 3
Palace of Night
Slow to medium to medium fast
- Scene 4
The Forest
Slow to medium fast
- Scene 5
In Front of the Curtain
Medium fast
- Scene 6
The Graveyard
Medium fast to fast to slow
- Scene 7
The Leave Taking
Medium fast to slow
- Scene 8
The Awakening
Medium slow to slow

As you can see, this production from a director's point of view is not an easy task, but it is a most enjoyable one. In this particular production an added difficulty was put on the director: that of creating the dances and choreographing the movement. It is important that the director handle the entire production with a delicate treatment, or much of the beauty of the play will be lost.

Rehearsals

At least six weeks of rehearsals are needed in presenting this play. The rehearsal hours should run from between two and three hours each. The first week should be spent in initial blocking and discussion of the play and its character so that every member of the cast can visualize what the final result should be according to the design of the director. Then work toward that goal. The following two weeks should be spent on individual scenes in a play of this type. The last three weeks the entire show should be rehearsed each time, for in a play constructed such as this one, it is important and most difficult to have an integrated production.



Scene from the production of *The Blue Bird* described by Robert Bannister.

Staging

The staging difficulties for a play of this type can be either very difficult or simplified greatly. In the production under consideration they were simplified as much as possible. The dominating color scheme was blue (turquoise) and gold. A plain back drop was used at the rear of the stage with a series of platforms in front of this and the Linnebach projector behind the platform to project the scenery on the above mentioned backdrop. In front of this was a black-traveler curtain. Ten feet in front of this was a gold traveler curtain plus the main house curtain. The scenery used scene by scene was as follows.

The Wood-Cutter's cottage played in front of the black curtain was a yellow gold cut down peasant cottage trimmed in red, blue, and green.

The Fairy's Palace played in front of the gold traveler, white pillars trimmed in pale green with pale blue chairs.

The Palace of Night played in front of the black traveler curtain trimmed in silver; black traveler opens showing the birds of the moon on the platform arrangement that is referred to above.

The Forest scene is played on these same platforms with a different slide projected from the Linnebach.

In Front of the Curtain is played in front of the gold curtain.

The Graveyard is played in front of the above mentioned platforms plus a new setting for the Linnebach projector.

The Leave Taking is played in front of the gold curtain.

The Awakening finds you back once again at the cottage with very minor changes.

Lighting

This element played an important part in this presentation. Surprise pink and straw were the dominating colors. Green was used in the Forest scene, a deep blue on the palace of night, and purple and magenta were used at various times during the Graveyard sequence. The Linnebach projector was used to excellent advantage. An abstraction of Blue Bird wings, a tree and a garden composed the projected portion of the settings although a definite attempt was made to give all the scenery this same quality and much of this was done through the unrealistic lighting.

Costuming

The play was costumed in fanciful costumes with a feeling of the modern and sophisticated, yet keeping a fairy-like touch so that they would be of interest to old and young alike.

Mother Tyl: Peasant outfit, blue, black, white.

Father Tyl: Peasant outfit, blue, navy.

Blue Bird: Fanciful bird outfit, blue-green and rose net, ballet style.

Tyltyl: Glorified peasant outfit, blue-green shirt, red vest, blue trousers.

Mytiltyl: Glorified party dress, light blue, yellow.

Butler: Butler's outfit, red, green.

Party Children: Party clothes, red, green.

Fairy Berylune: Cape, dark green; Fairy costume, pale

Fire: Flame costume, red, blue, gold, green, red tights.

Dog: Semi-Moliere coat, red, gold, spotted tights.

Cat: Long velvet costume, black to suggest a cat, black tights.

The seven articles which have appeared in this department during the current season will be reprinted as Supplement No. 2 of HOW THEY WERE STAGED, with copies becoming available at a small cost about June 1. The complete list of plays discussed this season is as follows: STARDUST, MISS LULU BETT, DEAR RUTH, CUCKOOS ON THE HEARTH, THE DOCTOR IN SPITE OF HIMSELF, THE BLUE BIRD, and JANUARY THAW.

Water: A draped gown with flowing soft draped effect, blue, green.

Milk: A flowing robe along Chinese designs, white.

Sugar: A semi-Chinese jacket, blue and white, white tights.

Bread: A Turkish outfit, blue, maroon, gold.

Light: A draped gown with brilliant design to suggest sun rays, yellow, gold.

Night: A navy blue draped gown with silver, brilliance glimmering through, navy blue, silver.

The Trees: Green tights with leave patterns.

Neighbor Berligot: Peasant outfit, green, black.

Butterflies: Capes, multi-colored brilliance, blue.

Neighbor Berligot's little daughter: Peasant party dress, green, yellow.

Make-up

The characters themselves suggest the make-up desired for a production of this type. If it is a production on the suggestive level such as this presentation was, the make-up should of course fall into this pattern. If a more realistic treatment is desired, then a more realistic treatment of this element of production would be created. Head dresses can aid greatly in the suggesting of the play's characters. At least 30 head-dresses were made for this particular presentation. The way in which these were constructed was by taking paper strips of tape and using a light cheese-cloth over the person's head; the tape is dampened, then the desired shape is formed to fit the person.

Budget

The budget for the show was close to \$750.00. This was given as a thesis play and was adapted from one medium to a new medium for this particular play; therefore, it was given an experimental treatment and everything had to be created especially for this production. Under ordinary circumstances the show with wise planning should be presented for far less. All but about \$50.00 went into costumes.

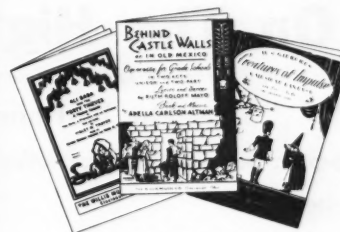
Publicity

Posters and the college paper served as the major source of publicity.

Results

Since the play was presented as portion of a Master's thesis project, the experimental presentation was of course the factor of utmost interest. It was played on a highly suggestive level and was acclaimed by old and young alike as a new and lovely interpretation of Maeterlinck's play. The audience response was excellent throughout, both when given for adult audiences and for children's audiences.

October issue: YEARS AGO



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Mention Dramatics Magazine

On The High School Stage

News items published in this department are contributed by schools affiliated with

The National Thespian Society

In order to provide space for all Thespian troupes reporting news items as of April 1, we have found it necessary to condense most of the reports appearing in this issue. However, we shall return to the more detailed style we normally observe in these accounts with the October issue—our first of the 1948-49 season.—Editor

Morrilton, Ark.

MORRILTON High School, Thespian Troupe 431, Myrtie Farish, sponsor. *The Big Blow Up, The Skeleton Walks, The Unexpected Guests, Ceres and Prosperpina, Pyramus and Thisbe, Just Relax*, scene from *Silas Marner*. Thespian meetings held monthly. Helen Farris, troupe president.—Carline Sledge, Secretary-Treasurer

Marysville, Kansas

MARYSVILLE High School, Thespian Troupe 500, Donald F. Williams, sponsor. *Rich for a Day*, senior class play (title to be announced). *Meet the Boss, The Answer Is Yes, I shall Be Waiting, Henpeck Holler Gossip, Winter Sunset*. Radio dramas: *A Quiet Day on the Farm, Known But To God*. Thespian meetings held twice a month.

Clinton, Iowa

LYONS High School, Thespian Troupe 359, Clara Rose White, sponsor. Program of three one-act plays: *The Valiant, Sparkin', First Dress Suit*. Thespian troupe meetings held every other week. L. D. Carstensen, troupe president.—Chris Martin, Secretary

Rochester, Minn.

LOURDES High School, Thespian Troupe 747, William Kouski, sponsor. St. Valentine's Day dinner dance given for Thespian members by Mr. Kouski. Officers for 1948 announced as follows: Madeline Popp, president; Niki Gores, vice-president; Jacquelyn McNiff, secretary; Sigmund Cusewski, treasurer.—Phyllis Pintaudi, Reporter

Muscatine, Iowa

MUSCATINE High School, Thespian Troupe 585, June Lingo, sponsor. *A Credit to the Family, Humming Bird Hiccups, Wheres That Report Card, I'll Eat My Hat, Christmas at Casey's, Just What They Wanted*. Other activities: Cotton Blossom Follies, Christmas party and Thespian initiation ceremony, exchange program with Iowa City Paint and Patches Dramatics Club.—Francene Glatstein, Reporter

Geneva, Ohio

GENEVA High School, Troupe 368, Juanita Markham, sponsor. *Meet a Body, How to Propose*. Troupe meetings held bi-monthly. Bill White, troupe president.—Nancy Beight, Secretary

San Marcos, Texas

SAN MARCOS High School, Thespian Troupe 422, Mrs. Jack Newcomb, sponsor. *The Groom Said No, Nobody Sleeps, Be Home by Midnight, The Farmer's Daughter*. Troupe meetings held twice a week—study of make-up, lighting, costuming, characterization. Aileen Titsworth, troupe president.—Wanda Bragg, Secretary

Knoxville, Tenn.

YOUNG High School, Thespian Troupe 415, Mrs. Mariam Garrett, sponsor. *Home Sweet Homicide, Beauty and the Beef, Kind Lady, The White Lawn, Good Medicine, Jean D'Arc, Rich Man—Poor Man, Varieties of 1948*, formal Thespian induction ceremony at Whittles Springs Hotel.—Evalyn Roberts, Secretary

Encinitas, Calif.

SAN DIEGUITO Union High School, Thespian Troupe 503, Ruth H. Higgins, sponsor. *Our Hearts Were Young and Gay, For All Eternity, Charity Ball, Come Let Us Adore Him*. Student trips to Pasadena Playhouse and the San Diego Community Theatre.—Alan Biery, Secretary

Norwich, N. Y.

NORWICH High School, Thespian Troupe 676, Isabelle C. Ramel, sponsor. *Hansel and Gretel, You Can't Take It With You, The Pot Boiler, I'm a Fool, Materia Medica, The Rising of the Moon, The Chimes of Normandy*, and Nativity pageant.—Bette Rowe, Secretary

Brownsville, Pa.

BBROWNSVILLE Senior High School, Thespian Troupe 187, Jean E. Donahey, sponsor. *Out of This World, Home Sweet Homicide, We Shook the Family Tree, Big Time, Good-night Please, Virtue Triumphant, Kill the Old Red Rooster, Everyman*. Other dramatic events: minstrel show, Christmas pageant, drama clinic.—Donna McCune, Secretary

Robbinsdale, Minn.

ROBBINSDALE Senior High School, Thespian Troupe 352, Bess V. Sinnott, sponsor. Original play on Safety, theatre parties to *Song of Norway, All My Sons, and Macbeth*, original script in observance of Valentine Day, drama festival, and performance of *Within the Hour* as part of American literature program. Special project: making of model stage for school administration.

Terre Haute, Indiana

GARFIELD High School, Thespian Troupe 731, Frieda Bedwell, sponsor. *The Tin Hero, Summer Song, His First Love, To the Victor, Crazy Violet*, Junior Revue, Senior Revue. Dramatics club meetings held every Wednesday. Nineteen students granted membership. Paul Meyers, troupe president.—Homer Sisson, Secretary

Clay, W. Va.

CLAY COUNTY High School, Thespian Troupe 458, Jane B. Harris, sponsor. *Out of This World, Pa Has a Fit, The Bug-town Band, The Fatal Dose, Sadie Hawkins Day*, talent show, Christmas program. Dramatics club meetings devoted to study of make-up, study of scenes from *Macbeth*.—Keota Friend, Secretary

Richland, Wash.

COLUMBIA High School, Thespian Troupe 640, Teresa C. White, sponsor. Purchase of new stage curtain, construction of twenty-seven flats, *Best Years*, sponsorship of University of Washington Touring Theatre in productions of *She Stoops to Conquer* and *Macbeth*, Spanish Club "Fiesta", *Act Your Age, Lorna Loon's Fate* (pantomime), approximately twenty-five students expected to qualify for Thespian membership this spring.—Bill Lutton, Secretary

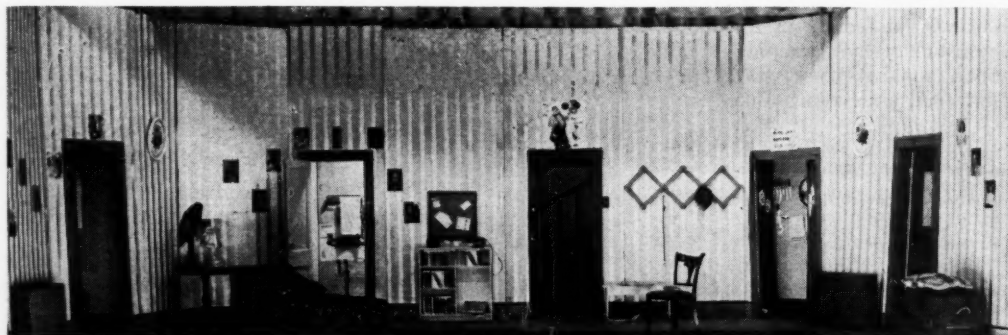
Nampa, Idaho

NAMPA Senior High School, Thespian Troupe 222, Doris L. Lisk, sponsor. *A Date With Judy*, three one-act plays, participation in drama festival held at Gonzaga University, host to local drama festival, participation in district and state festivals. *We Shook the Family Tree*. Eleven students granted Thespian membership in March. Dramatics club meetings held every first and third Sunday of each month. Gloria Yost, troupe president.—Barbara Ladd, Secretary

Tuckahoe, New York

EASTCHESTER High School, Thespian Troupe 604, Mary Ella Bovee, sponsor. *What a Life*, program of three one-act plays, program for the entertainment of guests at the Gramatan Hotel, Bronxville, New York, third annual Talent Night with over three hundred students participating, spring three-act play, presentation of pageant based upon local history as part of graduation exercises in June. Masquers and Thespians traveled to New York: visited Brooks Costume Company, appearances on CBS radio show, *Missus Goes Shopping*, visit to Radio City.

This set added much to the success of the production of *OUT OF THE FRYING PAN* at the Benton Harbor, Mich., High School with Margaret L. Meyn as director. (Thespian Troupe 455).



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Henderson, N. Car.

FASSIFERN School for Girls, Thespian Troupe 145, Estelle Elliott, sponsor. *Glee Plays the Game*, National Drama Week observed through a series of daily coordinated assembly programs, recital in Speech Arts, program of three contrasting one-act plays scheduled for this spring.—*Betty Jean Flanary, Secretary*

Hot Springs, Ark.

HOT SPRINGS High School, Thespian Troupe 78, Lois Alexander, sponsor. *High Window, Tiger House*, Christmas Candle-light Service and program, observance of National Drama Week with performance of three one-act plays and two radio programs, *A Case of Springtime*. Spring activities include several one-act plays and Senior Class per-

formance of *The Barretts of Wimpole Street*. Two Thespian inductions held.—*Barbara Harrington, Secretary*

Perry, Iowa

PERRY High School, Thespian Troupe 346, Janet E. Murray, sponsor. *Brother Goose, The Happy Journey, Papa Is All*. Seven students granted membership in March. Activities of Troupe being broadened under Miss Murray's direction.

Miami, Fla.

MIAAMI Senior High School, Thespian Troupe 327, Rochelle I. Williams, sponsor. *Out of this World, Our Town, Miss Personality Plus, Thanks Awfully, Slave Girl, His First Girl, Enter the Hero, Why the Chimes Rang*, radio program over Station WMBM in observance of National Drama Week. Thespians attended performances of *The Late*

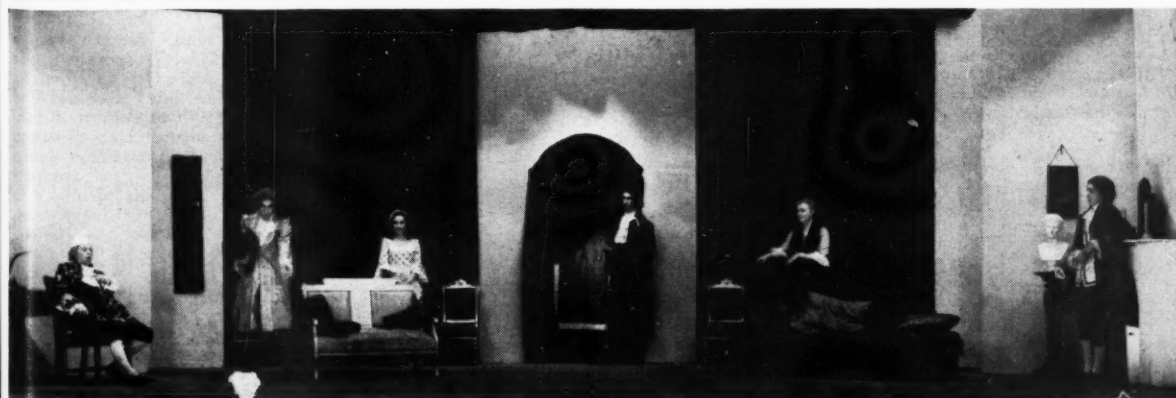
Christopher Bean, The Importance of Being Earnest, and The Glass Menagerie at the University of Miami.—*Lorraine Hammer, Secretary*

Benton Harbor, Mich.

BENTON HARBOR High School, Thespian Troupe 455, Margaret L. Meyn, sponsor. Christmas dinner party, *A Sign Unto You*, assisted with production of *You Can't Take It With You* given by Benton Harbor Teachers' Association. Exhibit and presentation of two original one-act plays given in observance of National Drama Week, climaxed by radio broadcast over Station WHFB.—*Barbara St. Louis, Secretary*

Lubbock, Texas

LUBBOCK Senior High School, Thespian Troupe 240, D. M. Howell, sponsor. *Dear Ruth, Captain Applejack, Upward and*



THE IMAGINARY INVALID as given by members of Thespian Troupe 420 of the Frank B. Willis High School, Delaware, Ohio. The production was directed by Doris Hunter.



This panel of pictures was exhibited in connection with the observance of National Drama Week, February 8 through 14, at the El Dorado, Arkansas, High School (Thespian Troupe 42). Dramatics and Thespian activities at this school are under the direction of Bene Gene Smith.

Onward, This Night Shall Pass, Carol of the World, Billie's First Date, Shirt-Tail Boy, Thursday Evening, Cotton Club Minstrels, two radio broadcasts. Attendance at Barter Theatre performance of The Importance of Being Earnest. Dramatics club meetings devoted to review of Broadway plays and study of one-act plays.—Mary Ruth Hopling, Secretary

Humboldt, Tenn.

HUMBOLDT High School, Thespian Troupe 101, Audrey Lee Allen, sponsor. *The Highwayman* (choral speaking group) *A Date for Bobby Sox, The Trysting Place, I'll Be Waiting, Bessie the Bandit's Beautiful Baby, Quiet Summer.* Dramatics club meetings held every other Monday with meetings devoted to study of stage techniques, directing, and play reviews. Six students granted Thespian membership in March.

Elkview, W. Va.

ELKVIEW High School, Thespian Troupe 152, Virginia E. Flint, sponsor. Amateur show, *Elk Hi Varieties, Christmas cantata (The Christmas Song of the Ages), annual minstrel show, Dear Ruth or Smilin' Through* (scheduled for May), presentation of awards during Commencement Week. Dramatic club meetings held weekly — devoted to study of make-up, stage equipment, costumes, and committee reports. Palma Jane Given, troupe president.—Elma Powell, Secretary

Houston, Texas

LAMAR High School, Thespian Troupe 153, Mrs. B. R. Hennes, sponsor. *Summons of Sarel, Mary, Queen of Scots, Origin of Silent Night, Alice in Wonderland, Mr. Lincoln's Whiskers.* Dramatics club meetings held twice a semester. Seven students granted Thespian membership this spring. Mary Ellen Donnelly, troupe president.—Virginia Power, Secretary

Wetumpka, Ala.

WETUMPKA High School, Thespian Troupe 125, Helen Cousins, sponsor. Re-organization of Thespian Troupe and broadening of dramatics activities. Dramatic club meetings held twice a month. Spring productions: *Friday the Thirteenth, Smilin' Through.* Seven students granted Thespian membership. Annie Mae Morris, troupe president.—Sue Jowers, Secretary

Mullens, W. Va.

MULLENS High School, Thespian Troupe 197, Ruth T. O'Dell, sponsor. *Love Is*

Too Much Trouble, Christmas play, minstrel show, variety show. Dramatics club meetings held twice a month — devoted to study of make-up, stage scenery, review plays. Fifteen students granted Thespian membership. Curtis Clay, troupe president.

Detroit, Mich

REDFORD Union High School, Thespian Troupe 600, Robert W. Morse, sponsor. *High Window, The Forest Prince, Here Comes the Groom.* Dramatics club meetings held

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twice a month with presentation of one-act plays as main item of programs. Norma Doidge, troupe president.—Vena Lentz, Secretary.

Cheney, Wash.

CHENEY Senior High School, Thespian Troupe 267, Leone Webber, sponsor. *Goodbye to the Lazy K, What a Life, The Boy Who Discovered Easter, Senior Class play* (spring production). Approximately eleven student expected to qualify for Thespian membership this spring. Betty Beall, troupe president.

Weston, W. Va.

WESTON High School, Thespian Troupe 99, Mary Christine Swint, sponsor. Inter-class tournament (*The Curtain, On Vengeance Height, Circumstances Alter Cases, Mrs. Murphy's Chowder, January Thaw, Judge Lynch, Junior and Senior Class plays* (titles to be announced). Dramatics club meetings held twice a month with meetings devoted to study of principles of acting, make-up demonstrations, and presentation of short scenes. Betty Kafer, troupe president.—Jo Ann Gump, Secretary

Ely, Nevada

WHITE PINE County High School, Thespian Troupe 768, Robert S. Maxwell, sponsor. Revue (*Gentlemen, Be Seated*), one-act play contest scheduled for May. Approximately twelve students expected to qualify for Thespian membership by end of this season. Dramatics club meetings held weekly with program given to study of play selection. Glenn A. Duncan, Jr., troupe president.—Carol Call, Secretary

Shelly, Idaho

SHELLEY High School, Thespian Troupe 618, F. J. Peterson, sponsor. *Broken Engagement, The Burglar, Life of the Party, Never Trust a Man, Scarlett Shadow.* Approximately sixteen students expect to qualify for Thespian membership by close of this season. Troupe meetings held weekly. Deloy Beasley, troupe president.—Vivian Tew, Secretary.

Oceanside, Calif.

OCEANSIDE-CARLSBAD Union High School, Thespian Troupe 792, Margaret Withmarsh, sponsor. *The Daffy Dills.* Six students expect to qualify for membership this spring.

Fitzgerald, Ga.

FITZGERALD High School, Thespian Troupe 648, Rachel McCrea, sponsor. *Christmas Bells, Mildred Is My Name, The Purple Rim, The Curtain, Sunday's Child, Balcony Scene.* Dramatics club meetings held monthly with programs devoted to history of the theatre and presentation of one-act plays. Caroline Hopkins, troupe president.—Billy Deese, Secretary

Hingham, Mass.

HINGHAM High School, Thespian Troupe 837, Grace D. Healey, sponsor. *Our Hearts Were Young and Gay, Columbine Madonna, When the Sun Rises, He said and She Said, Romance of Willow Pattern, Freshman choral group.* Dramatics club meetings held twice a month with programs given to previews of new plays. Fifteen students expect to qualify for Thespian membership this season. Joseph Willingham, troupe president.—Virginia Maynard, Secretary

Fair Oaks, Calif.

SAN JUAN Union High School, Thespian Troupe 289, Shirley A. Hewitt, sponsor. *Not Tonight, A Thought for Christmas, One of Us, January Thaw, cutting from The Taming of The Shrew, Senior Class Play.* Twelve students expect to qualify for Thespian mem-

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Members of Thespian Troupe 258 of the Ensley High School, Birmingham, Alabama, in a scene from the new play, *The Moon Makes Three*, by Aurand Harris. Directed by Florence Pass.



One of several major productions this season at the Hazleton, Pa., Senior High School (Thespian Troupe 257) was *KISS AND TELL* with Marion V. Brown as director. The scene shown here marked one of several episodes in the play which the audience applauded.

bership by end of year. Dramatics club meetings held weekly. Charles Duncan, troupe president.—*Shirley Dale, Secretary*

Coronado, Calif.

CORONADO High School, Thespian Troupe 716, Bernhard L. Bernard, sponsor. *Let's Make Up, Stardust, The Monkey's Paw, A Date With Judy, Ladies of the Mop, The Lady or The Tiger, Weines on Wednesday.* Dramatics club meetings held once a month with program devoted to production problems. Henry Weeks, troupe president.—*Julianne Sawyer, Secretary*

Murfreesboro, Tenn.

CENTRAL High School, Thespian Troupe 349, Mrs. George Campbell, sponsor. *Act Your Age, Arsenic and Old Lace.* Dramatics club meetings held weekly. Twelve students are expected to qualify for Thespian membership by end of season. Joe Hughes, troupe president.—*Betty Tenpenny, Secretary*

Ellinwood, Iowa

ELLINWOOD High School, Thespian Troupe 659, Rose Hoch Helbing, sponsor. *Bringing Home The Bacon, Wheat Fire, A Matter of Husbands, The Proposal, Senior Class play* (title to be announced). Dramatics club meetings held every other week with programs devoted to discussion of plays to be given. Eight to ten students expected to qualify for Thespian membership by close of this season. Donna Blehm, troupe president.—*Ann Therese Schwartz, Secretary*

Casper, Wyo.

NATRONA COUNTY High School, Thespian Troupe 1, Vesta Carpenter, sponsor. *Tish.* Dramatics club meetings held once a month. Eight students expected to qualify for Thespian membership this season. Jack Tripeny, troupe president.—*Marie Minor, Secretary*

Lexington, Mo.

LEXINGTON High School, Thespian Troupe 777, Elizabeth A. Gruber. *Suddenly It Was Spring, The Tree, The Little Red Schoolhouse, Cinderella.* Dramatics club meetings held every two weeks. Rita Martin, troupe president.—*Beverly Allen, Secretary*

New Berlin, Ill.

NEW BERLIN High School, Thespian Troupe 188, Elizabeth Zimmerman. *The Eager Beavers, January Thaw.* Fifteen or twenty students are expected to qualify for Thespian membership by the end of this season. Don Greening, troupe president.—*Norma Chandler, Secretary*

Hastings, Minn.

HASTINGS High School, Thespian Troupe 523, Elizabeth Cachiaras, sponsor. *Our Hearts Were Young and Gay, Exclusive Model,*

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Breakfast at Eight. Dramatics club held monthly. Twelve to fifteen students expected to qualify for Thespian membership this season. Ray Kranz, troupe president.—*Jane Kratz, Secretary*

Iron Mountain, Mich.

IRON MOUNTAIN High School, Thespian Troupe 174, Alma Matthewson, sponsor. *Dear Ruth, The Strangest Feeling, Night Must Fall.* Dramatics club meetings devoted to play selection, rehearsals, drama appreciation. Sixteen students expected to qualify for Thespian membership by end of year. Vern Dahlquist, troupe president.—*Jean Flodin, Secretary*

Walnut Ridge, Ark.

WALNUT RIDGE High School, Thespian Troupe 262, Marjorie Ottinger, sponsor. *Almost Summer, The Christmas Pearl, Meet A Body, Anne of Green Gables.* Current plays and attendance at performances given by local and neighboring groups major activities of dramatics club. Ten to twelve students expected to qualify for Thespian membership this season. Loyd Dinkins, troupe president.—*Barbara Logan, Secretary*

Frederick, Okla.

FREDERICK High School, Thespian Troupe 815, Mrs. Herbert Birkhead, sponsor. *You Can't Take It With You, The Tree, The City Slicker and Our Nell, Night of January 16.* Dramatics club meetings given to study of acting, make-up, and radio activities. About ten new members are expected to qualify for Thespian membership this spring. Jimmie Lytton, troupe president.—*Sue Morten, Secretary*

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Shenandoah, Iowa

SHENANDOAH High School, Thespian Troupe 133, Harriet A. Klohs, sponsor. *The Farmer's Daughter, Don't Take My Penny, High School Daze, A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court.* Dramatics club meetings held once every six weeks with programs centered on discussion of "Theatre Guild of the Air" plays. Delores Hankins, troupe president.—*Merrill Gee, Secretary*

Custer, S. Dak.

CUSTER High School, Thespian Troupe 384, Roland D. Johnson, sponsor. *Boys About Bobbette, Comin' Round The Mountain, The Ghost Wore White, How To Propose,* (Senior Class play to be announced). Dramatics club meetings held monthly with program given to study of play production, make-up, review of new plays. Twelve students expected to qualify for Thespian membership by end of this season. David Kiel, troupe president.—*Donna Zeimet, Secretary*

La Rue, Ohio

LA RUE High School, Thespian Troupe 778, Margaret Selanders, Mary Joe Lauby, sponsors. *Spring Fever.* Dramatics club meetings held every two weeks. About ten students are expected to qualify for Thespian membership by end of this season. Ralph Wilson, troupe president.—*Lillian Outland, Secretary*

Sioux Center, Iowa

SIOUX CENTER High School, Thespian Troupe 764, Alvin R. M. Patterson, sponsor. *The Whole Town's Talking, Book Larnin'* (original), Senior Class play to be announced. Dramatics club meetings held monthly, with programs given to play selection. Ruth Veneer, troupe president.—*Luverna Van Putten, Secretary*

Auburn, Wash.

AUBURN Senior High School, Thespian Troupe 626, Harriet J. Nelson, sponsor. *We Shook the Family Tree, The Farmer's Daughter, Roaring Twenties Revue* (original). Dramatics club meetings held monthly with programs devoted to study of school stage improvements. Ten students are expected to qualify for Thespian membership this season. Eileen Larberg, troupe president.—*Beverly Bidleman, Secretary*

Duluth, Minn.

CENTRAL High School, Thespian Troupe 506, Lydia Butth, sponsor. *You Can't Take It With You, The Night of January 16th.* Weekly dramatics club meetings devoted to study of make-up, staging, and reviews of current Broadway plays. Nineteen students are expected to receive Thespian membership this season. Norma Bellows, troupe president.—*Lucille Tweit, Secretary*

Yellow Springs, Ohio

BRYAN High School, Thespian Troupe 588, Mary E. Cochran, sponsor. *The Late Mr. Early*, *Good Night Ladies*. Dramatics club meetings are held twice a month with programs given to study of stagecraft make-up, and lighting. Philip Henderson, troupe president.—*Nancy Fess, Secretary*

Ellwood City, Pa.

LINCOLN High School, Thespian Troupe 507, Eleanor Rodgers, sponsor. *The Man in the Bowler Hat*, *When Elmer Played John Alden*, *Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, *Why the Chimes Rang*, *Mrs. Iva Newway's School* (pantomine), *The Case of the Missing Witness*, Senior Class play (title to be announced). Dramatics club meetings devoted to study of costuming, advertising play production. William Stedman, troupe president.—*Mary Ellen Ohl, Secretary*

The Dalles, Oregon

THE DALLES High School, Thespian Troupe 374, Lester T. Jansen, sponsor. *Mignonette*, *The Great Big Doorstep*, third major production to be announced. Dramatics club meetings held bi-monthly. Philis Ryan, troupe president.—*Phyllis Kinchelde, Secretary*

Miami Beach, Fla.

SENIOR High School, Thespian Troupe 391, Betty Sokoloff, sponsor. Variety show, "History of Drama", scenes from several classical plays, *Prelude, in a Bookshop*, *City Slicker* and *Our Nell*, *George Washington Slept Here*. Dramatics club meetings are held twice a month, with programs devoted to play reviews, trends in stage designing, motion picture appreciation, and make-up.—*Hilary Levin, Secretary*

Minerva, Ohio

MINERVA High School, Thespian Troupe 497, E. Lucille Trickett, sponsor. *Here Come the Brides*, *The Christmas That Bounced*, *Our Hearts Were Young and Gay*, *Three Taps on the Wall*, *Light and Romantic*, *Aunt Jennie* and *the Quarterback*. Monthly meetings devoted to study of acting and play reviews. Gloria Reed, troupe president.—*Lottie Lippencott, Secretary*

Parma, Idaho

PARMA High School, Thespian Troupe 835, Julia Yensen, sponsor. *Here She Comes*, *The Atomic Cloud*, two additional three-act plays to be announced. Over twenty students are expected to qualify for Thespian membership by close of season. Monthly dramatic club meetings devoted to review of plays. Josephine Well, troupe president.—*Helen Trayner, Secretary*

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East Liverpool, Ohio

EAST LIVERPOOL High School, Thespian Troupe 319, O. W. Rohrbach, sponsor. *We Shook the Family Tree*, program of three one-act plays. Sixteen students are expected to qualify for Thespian membership this season. Robert Banfield, troupe president.—*Thelma Markantoss, Secretary*

Fairmont, Minn.

FAIRMONT High School, Thespian Troupe 261, Virginia Carlson, sponsor. *Junior Miss*, Senior Class play to be announced. Semi-monthly dramatics club meetings given to study of plays to be produced. Donna Fancher, troupe president.—*Margaret Scott, Secretary*

Buhl, Idaho

BUHL High School, Thespian Troupe 394, Mrs. J. S. Oswald, secretary. *Shock of His Life*. Dramatics club meetings devoted to study of make-up, stage sets, and current plays. Eight or ten students are expected to qualify for Thespian membership by end of this season. Don Amos, troupe president.—*Barbara Aldrich, Secretary*

Daytona Beach, Fla.

MAINLAND High School, Thespian Troupe 35, Vincent P. McClintock, sponsor. *Double Door*, *A Room for the Prince*, *Si Si Senorita*, *Return*, *Papa Says No*, *Escape by Moonlight*. Students attended performance of *Dear Ruth* at Stetson University. Dramatics club meetings devoted to study of make-up, radio, stagecraft.—*Jackie Rich, Secretary*

Harrisburg, Ill.

HARRISBURG TOWNSHIP High School, Thespian Troupe 16, Lolo F. Eddy, sponsor. *Our Hearts Were Young and Gay*, *Lost Horizon*, *Twenty Drops*. Participation in district drama festival.—*Betty Lous Smith, Secretary*

Edmonds, Wash.

EDMONDS High School, Thespian Troupe 424, Mrs. H. E. Gleason, sponsor. *Adam's Evening*, *The Visitor*. Fifteen students expected to qualify for Thespian membership by end of this season.

Kansas City, Kansas

WYANDOTTE High School, Thespian Troupe 162, William Knapp, sponsor. *Dear Ruth* (two performances), *Why the Chimes Rang*, *We Shook the Family Tree* (two performances), *Home Sweet Homicide*, *Oven forty one-act plays* given during this season.—*Pat Pugh, President*

Ness City, Kansas

NESS CITY High School, Thespian Troupe 742, Darlene Thompson, sponsor. *The Mountain House Mystery*, Senior Class play, one-act contest play. Six students granted Thespian membership so far this season. Jean Antenen, troupe president.—*Courtenay Ernest, Secretary*

Aurora, Nebr.

AURORA High School, Thespian Troupe 17, Loine Gaines, sponsor. *Don't Take My Penny*, *Barretts of Wimpole Street* (tentative), *The Two Timers*, *His Brother's Keeper*, *The Empty Room*, *Guest at the Inn*, original skit. Dramatics club meetings devoted to reviewing worth while teaching films.—*Betty Ann Roberts, Secretary*

Plentywood, Mont.

PLENTYWOOD High School, Thespian Troupe 360, Katherine Niedermeyer, sponsor. *Mumbo Jumbo*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Down and Up*, skits, Junior and Senior entertainment. Dramatics club meetings given to the presentation of plays. Twenty-six or more students are expected to qualify for Thespian membership by end of this season. Dorothy Redmond, troupe president.—*Robert Power, Secretary*

Middletown, N. Y.

MIDDLETOWN High School, Thespian Troupe 74, Miles S. McClain, and Manual Rosenblum, co-sponsors. *January Thaw*, Variety show in which over twenty-five Thespians took part.

Hope, Ark.

HOPE High School, Thespian Troupe 36, Mrs. B. E. McMahan, sponsor. *Don't Take My Penny*, Senior Class play (title to be announced), American history pageant, *Amateur Night*, *Hearts and Blossoms* (operetta), thirty-minute radio over station KXAR to climax observance of National Drama Week in February. Students write scripts for daily

One of the highlights of the current season for dramatics students of the Hope, Arkansas, High School was the formal installation of Thespian Troupe 36 under the direction of Mrs. B. E. McMahan and Principal R. E. Baker.





The Thespian initiation ceremony at the Young High School, Knoxville, Tenn., with Miriam E. Garrett as sponsor. Mrs. Garrett sponsors a lively dramatics program each season.

radio program over local station. Thespian troupe installed in February with sixteen students forming the charter roll.—Dora Lou Franks, Secretary

War, West Va.

BIG CREEK High School, Thespian Troupe 260, Harrylee D. Utz, sponsor. *Spring Fever, Mooncalf Mugford*, second major production scheduled for this spring. Approximately ten students are expected to qualify for Thespian membership this season. Dramatics club meetings are held monthly with programs devoted to the presentation of plays. Kenneth Branch, troupe president.—Catherine Fitzgerald, Secretary

Kimball, West Va.

KIMBALL High School, Thespian Troupe 542, Cortes A. Purcelle, sponsor. *High School Daze, No Greater Love, A King Is Born, The Drum, Beachhead for Freedom, Jumping Jewels, The Washington Years, Thanks to George Washington, Heart Trouble, The Festered Lily*. Monthly meetings of the dramatics club devoted to various subjects pertaining to play production. Twelve students are expected to qualify for Thespian membership by end of season.—Velma Martin, Secretary

Wamego, Kansas

WAMEGO High School, Thespian Troupe 744, Francis J. Revitte, sponsor. *The Fighting Littles, Why the Chimes Rang, Senior Class* play scheduled for this spring. Fifteen students will qualify for Thespian membership by close of this season. Dramatics club meetings held monthly. Bernard Hanson, troupe president.—Betty Knoebber, Secretary

Carlsbad, New Mexico

CARLSBAD High School, Thespian Troupe 775, Nicholas J. Kockler, sponsor. *A Date With Judy, Footballs and Powder Puffs, Mollie O'Shaughnessey, Land's End, The Whistler's Mother*. Weekly radio program over station KAVE. Dramatics club meetings held monthly. Fourteen students granted Thespian membership in March. Leslie Hunt, troupe president.—Jimmy Rogers, Secretary

Fort Stockton, Texas

FORT STOCKTON High School, Thespian Troupe 696, C. E. Landrum, sponsor. *Murder in Rehearsal, Grapes for Dinner, Tin Hero, The Enchanted Rose*, choral speaking program, Christmas pageant. Dramatics club meetings held twice a month.

Spartanburg, S. Car.

SPARTANBURG High School, Thespian Troupe 696, C. E. Landrum, sponsor. *We Shook the Family Tree, Angel Street*. Dramatics club meetings held monthly. Ten students are expected to receive Thespian membership this season. Robina Bagwell, president. P. Burwell, Secretary

Junior League Children's Theatre Calendar

WHEELING JUNIOR LEAGUE is sponsoring a season of plays presented by Grace Price Productions of Pittsburgh, *Hansel and Gretel, Many Moons, Young David and the Giant*, PROVIDENCE JUNIOR LEAGUE — *Beauty and the Beast*. Nov. 29.

BIRMINGHAM JUNIOR PROGRAMS presented as second attraction of the season *The Emperor's New Clothes*, produced by freshmen class of Montevallo College under direction of Walter Trambauer.

Presenting Strawbridge's *Simple Simon*: Roanoke Junior League, Tampa Junior League, Spokane Junior League, Williamsport Junior League, Corpus Christi Junior League.

Presenting Strawbridge's *An Arabian Night*:

Knoxville Junior League, Louisville Children's Theatre.

SPOKANE COMMUNITY CHILDREN'S THEATRE — *The Squire's Bride*, Fall

MOBILE JUNIOR LEAGUE — *Suzari Marionettes*, March

LOUISVILLE CHILDREN'S THEATRE

Dec. — *Christmas Nightingale*

Mar. — *Cinderella*

April — *Robin Hood*

MONTCLAIR JUNIOR LEAGUE —

Alladin, Nov.

READING JUNIOR LEAGUE —

Hans Brinker, Jan.

DALLAS JUNIOR LEAGUE —

Hansel and Gretel

EL PASO JUNIOR LEAGUE —

Rumpelstiltskin

Maquoketa, Iowa

MAQUOKETA High School, Thespian Troupe 691, Mrs. J. E. Phillips, sponsor. *A Date With Judy, Memories of 1918, Christmas Comes to the Blakes* (original), *George Washington Slept Here, The Goal Gate, The Terrible Meek*. Dramatics club meetings held every two weeks with programs given to the study of current plays and theatre history. Ten students expected to receive Thespian membership. Jim Coons, sponsor.—Louisa Stamp, Secretary

Caldwell, Idaho

CALDWELL High School, Thespian Troupe 407, Jeannette Rice, sponsor. *Spooks and Spasms, Grapes for Dinner, Death Takes a Holiday, The Greener Grass, I Shall Be Waiting, How to Propose, Hollywood Night Club*, contest play. Semi-monthly dramatics club meetings devoted to reviews of famous actors and famous plays. Twenty-six students admitted to Thespian membership so far this season. Richard Crowley, troupe president.—Pat Schubert, Secretary

Webb City, Mo.

WEBB CITY High School, Thespian Troupe 608, Marjorie Mercer, sponsor. *The Whole Town's Talking, The Visitor, Stardust, Three Cornered Moon* (tentative). Monthly dramatics club meetings devoted to study of play production, make-up, stage setting, lighting, and student directing. About a dozen students are expected to qualify for Thespian membership this season. Joe Sullens, troupe president.—Beverly Smith, Secretary

Ida Grove, Iowa

IDA GROVE High School, Thespian Troupe 746, Ted L. Fallesen, sponsor. *Queen for a Day, Night of January 16th, A Date With Judy*. Monthly dramatics club meetings given to the study of lighting, stage equipment, play production. Twelve students are expected to receive Thespian membership. Norma Henrich, troupe president.—Harriet Collins, Secretary

Williams, Ariz.

WILLIAMS High School, Thespian Troupe 199, Marion Higham, sponsor. *Miss Jimmy, Ask Nancy, Grandma Pulls the Strings, Paul Splits the Atom, Salad Days*. Six students are expected to be granted Thespian membership this season. Dramatics club meetings held monthly with programs devoted to study of make-up, stage settings, types of plays. Phillip McDonald, troupe president.—Jeanne Vick, Secretary

Ronceverte, West Va.

GREENBRIER High School, Thespian Troupe 298, Jesse C. Bobbitt, sponsor. *Through the Keyhole, Gloria Mundi*. Monthly dramatics club meetings devoted to organizational problems and reviews of plays. Fifteen students expected to qualify for Thespian membership. Phyllis Erwin, troupe president.—Mollie Clifford, Secretary

Huntington, West Va.

TEN high schools presented plays in the fifteenth annual West Virginia High School Drama Festival held at Marshall College on April 9, 10., with the festival being sponsored by The National Thespian Society. Each of the participating schools had previously entered one of the five district festivals held throughout the state. Plays given in the festival at Marshall College were as follows: *Who Gets the Car Tonight?* (Nitro High School — Sadie M. Daher, director), *This Night Shall Pass* (Wirt County High School — Betty Bryon Gainer, director), *Balcony Scene* (Woodrow Wilson High School, Beckley — John W. Saunders, director), *Judge Lynch* (Weston High School — Mary Christine Swint, director), *For the Love of Allah* (Magnolia High School, Matewan — Kathryn M. Talbert, director), *Utter Relaxation* (Fairview High School — Mary Sturm, director), *Where the Cross Is Made* (Williamson High School —

IN MEMORIAM

Jesse C. Bobbitt, sponsor for Thespian Troupe 298 of the Greenbrier High School, Ronceverte, West Virginia, and student Millie Ripley of the same school. Mr. Bobbitt and Miss Ripley were killed in a truck-automobile collision while en route to Concord College for a district drama festival.

R. E. Duffy, advertising manager for Samuel French, 25 West 45th Street, New York, N. Y. Mr. Duffy was associated with Samuel French for a number of years, taking an active part in the promotion of better plays among amateur theatre groups.

Rose G. Smith, director), *I'm A Fool* (Morgantown High School — Dorothy Stone White, director), *Dark Wind* (Parkersburg High School — Grace Marie Merrill, director), and *Weather Or No* (Warwood High School — Virginia Lynch, director). Entries were classified as Fair, Good, and Superior by Professor Homer N. Abegglen, director of the Miami University Theatre, Oxford, Ohio. Professor Abegglen also selected an All-State Cast of the six outstanding players.

Brazil, Indiana

THIRTY-THREE students were admitted as charter members of Thespian Troupe 872 in March at the Brazil Senior High School, with Juanita Hamm Shearer as sponsor and director of dramatics. A number of school officials were present at the impressive installation ceremony presented under Mrs. Shearer's direction; a tea followed the ceremony. Major dramatic productions given at this school during the current season were *A Date With Judy*, *New Fires*, *The Divine Flora*, and a minstrel show. A number of students attended performances of *January Thaw* and *Julius Caesar* at the State Teachers College of Terre Haute. Officers for the new troupe are: president, Gayle Scharf; vice-president, Kathryn Kellar; secretary, Joanne Loveall; and treasurer, Mary Ann Hayward.—Joanne Loveall, Secretary

Litchfield, Conn.

THREE major shows are included in this season's dramatics program at the Litchfield High School (Thespian Troupe 456), with John J. Flaherty as director. The first production consisted of four student-written one-act plays, *The Last Chance*, *The Mysterious Briefcase*, *Love of Sylvia Little*, *Christmas Customs*, given on December 2. The second show, *You're Only Young Once*, a three-act comedy followed on December 18. The third major production will be given in May. Mr. Flaherty writes that the entire dramatics program is being re-organized with plans for an expanded program being made for the opening of school in the fall. About ten students are expected to qualify for Thespian membership by the time the season comes to a close. J. Gale Soderberg is troupe president.—Donald Peck, Secretary

Carlsbad, Calif.

A successful program in dramatics was enjoyed this season by students of the Army and Navy Academy (Thespian Troupe 130) under the direction of Mrs. Wm. C. Atkinson. In August a number of students participated in the production of *Kings in Nomantia*, given by the Summer Little Theatre. Unusually successful was the production of the old-fashioned melodrama, *Gold in the Hills*, staged before a capacity audience in February. Plans are now being made for a production of *Double Door in June*. One-acts given in recent months were *Knight Life*, *Spook Island*, *Last Flight Over*, and *Thank you, Doctor*.—Richard P. Barrere, Secretary

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THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

Martinsville, Indiana

MAJOR dramatic shows opened this season at the Martinsville High School (Thespian Troupe 818) with the three-act comedy, *A Date With Judy*, presented to enthusiastic audience on December 9, 11, with Barbara J. Binford directing. At the time of this writing rehearsals were being conducted for two performances of the Senior Class play, *Hangman's Noose*, tentatively scheduled for April 21, 22. A third major play will be given in May under the sponsorship of the Dramatics Club. Dra-

matics Club meetings, held twice a month, are devoted to the study of current plays, scenery make-up, and the presentation of one-act plays. Fifteen to twenty students are expected to qualify for Thespian membership by the close of this season. Janis Duckworth is troupe president.—Alice Rose Moore, Secretary

Warsaw, Indiana

AN exceptional record in dramatic work is being made by the Dramatics Club of the Warsaw High School (Thespian Troupe 206)



Charter members of Thespian Troupe 530 formed this season at the Hopkins Missouri, High School under the direction of Paul Phillips.

Thespian Regional Conference

Over five hundred high school teachers and students attended a drama conference held at the William Penn Senior High School (Thespian Troupe 520), York, Pa., under the direction of Thespian Regional Director, Leon C. Miller. Invitations to the conference were sent early in April to all Thespian-affiliated high schools located within a one hundred mile radius from York, Pa., as well as to a large number of non-Thespian schools active in dramatics.

The program consisted of four one-act plays presented by Thespian troupes located at the following schools: Carlisle High School, John Harris High School (Harrisburg), West York High School, and William Penn High School (York); a display of programs, posters, and pictures; and brief reports of dramatic activities by students representing all of the Thespian troupes in attendance at the conference. A congratulatory telegram from the Thespian national office was read at the close of the program.

Mr. Miller's primary objective in sponsoring the conference was to focus attention upon the many benefits found in a well-directed dramatics program, thereby helping to combat the indifference found towards dramatics in many high schools.

under the leadership of Mrs. Herbert Petrie. This club was established three years ago with a membership of seventy junior and senior students. Sixty members of the club have made at least one public appearance so far this season, with the group having presented twenty programs for various clubs in the community. By the end of this season the group will have presented three major plays, in addition to the production of several assembly programs. At the present time preparations are being made for the production of the Senior Class play, *I Remember Mama*.—Eloise Bilby, Secretary

Encinitas, Calif.

A study of how to build stage flats and the dramatics club meetings held this season at the San Dieguito Union High School (Thespian Troupe 503, with Ruth H. Higgins as director). The Senior Class play, *Our Hearts Were Young and Gay*, was well received by large audiences on November 13, 14. Other dramatic productions presented so far this season are: *Stout-Hearted Freddie*, *For All Eternity*, *Charity Ball*, and *Come Let Us Adore Him*. A number of students have attended dramatic performances given by the Pasadena Playhouse and the San Diego Community Theatre.—Alan Biery, Secretary

Norwich, N. Y.

THESPIANS of Troupe 676 of the Norwich High School are receiving credit for sponsoring two major plays this season. Their first production of the season, *Hansel and Gretel*, was given on October 26, 27. The second play, *You Can't Take It With You*, is now under rehearsal and will be presented in April. Thespians and other dramatics students have also produced the following one-acts: *The Pot Boiler*, *I'm a Fool*, *Materia Medica*, *The Rising of the Moon*, a Nativity pageant, and the operetta, *The Chimes of Normandy*. Isabelle C. Ramel is dramatics director and troupe sponsor.—Betty Rowe, Secretary

Notice to Subscribers

DRAMATICS MAGAZINE is not published during the months of June, July, August, and September. We shall resume our publication schedule with the October, 1948, issue which will be mailed late in September.

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Play Club, Inc. Elizabethtown, Pa.

The Washington Years, a three-act Lincoln play, by Nat Sherman, 2 w., 15 m., 2 boys, extras; two interior, one exterior sets, (9 scenes—three for each act.) Royalty, \$25.00 to non-members (royalty free to members who are active at the time of the performance.) This play is soon to be released on Broadway. It is an excellent character study dealing with Lincoln's trials and difficulties of his first administration. It offers a splendid opportunity for the mature players of college and Little Theatre groups to do an historical drama. High school groups would find in the predominately male cast difficulty in securing mature looking actors.—*Jean E. Donahey*

Heart Trouble, a comedy in one act, by Mildred Hark and Noel McQueen. 2 w., 3 m. Royalty, \$10.00 to non-members (free to members in active standing at time of production.) This is a very charming Valentine comedy and suitable for high schools, church groups, college and community theatres. The Matthews family are a lovable normal one until they develop "heart trouble" in several unexpected ways. Nora, the maid, is a jewel and you will enjoy little brother Davey, while you sympathize with Junior. You will enjoy Mother and Dad in their treatment of "heart trouble".—*Jean E. Donahey*

Its So Complex, a one-act comedy, by Mildred Hark and Noel McQueen. 2 w., 3 m. Royalty, \$10.00 to non-members (free to active memberships.) Don Andrews takes up psychoanalysis to combat his girls interest in astrology, and the results make life very complex for his family. Excellent fun for high school and community groups.—*Jean E. Donahey*

Lear Publishers

24 East 11th Street, New York 3, N. Y.

Acting, a Handbook of the Stanislavski Method, compiled by Toby Cole, with an introduction by Lee Strasberg. 1947. 223 pages. Price, \$3.00. Several of the essays found in this handbook were originally published in *THEATRE WORKSHOP*, a publication of the New York Theatre League. Mr. Cole has performed a real service to theatre workers by bringing under one cover a wealth of material on the Stanislavski method written by persons who achieved unusual success in the field. Page for page, we believe there is more practical information in this handbook than may be found in many other books on the art of directing. All the contributors are Russians, including Sudakov, Chekhov, Vakhtangov, and Stanislavski himself. Theatre workers at all levels will find this handbook stimulating reading and highly rewarding. Educational theatre directors cannot afford to be without it.—*Ernest Bovey*

Greenberg Publishers

201 East 57th Street, New York 22, N. Y.

8 Popular Plays for Amateurs in Prompt Book Style, by Eugene C. Davis. 1948. 258 pages. Price \$4.00. Many readers of this magazine will readily identify Mr. Davis as the author of *Amateur Theater Handbook*, reviewed in these pages some months ago, and as the successful director of dramatics at the Glenville High School, Cleveland, Ohio. Mr. Davis's practical approach to the art of directing plays is again much in evidence in this, his latest contribution to the field. The eight plays which the author presents in prompt book

style are: *A Young Man's Fancy*, *The Dear Departed*, *When Shakespeare's Ladies Meet*, *The Flattering Word*, *Ile*, *The Crownest*, *The Lovely Miracle*, and *The Last of the Lowries*. Stage scenes, business, cues, words to be emphasized, etc., come in for their share of attention under Mr. Davis's expert direction with the result that here we have a book that is as complete as anyone would want, not only as a guide on directing the plays mentioned, but also an approach to the directing of other plays as well. Books of this kind go far in rendering the type of help which so many amateur directors need and which they rarely find in the average book on play production. Invaluable to high school drama teachers and directors.—*Ernest Bovey*

Eldridge Entertainment House Inc. Franklin, Ohio

East Am East, a romantic comedy in one act, by Mary Ruth Funk. 2 w., 3 m. Purchase of five copies required for production rights. Libby Todd's maid Delilah takes a hand in helping Libby to decide between the poet and the rancher. Its a clever bit of comedy for any group of young people and can use songs and dances if desired.—*Jean E. Donahey*

Free Tickets to Killarney, a comedy in one act, by John Davidson Hall. 3 w., 3 m. Purchase of six copies required for production rights. A good St. Patrick's day play. Molly Malloy refuses to return to Killarney to claim

an estate because her son who left home at an early age is there. It takes quite a few events such as an eviction and an engagement plus her disguised son to change her mind.—*Jean E. Donahey*

The Continental Press Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

There's Money in Witchcraft, a comedy in one act, by Donald Vining. 3 m., 4 w. Royalty, \$10.00 for non Play Club members. A modern young woman suddenly discovers that she is able to ride a broom through the air as a means of transportation. She and her family are besieged by publicity seekers. The fact that one of her ancestors had been hanged as a witch in Salem adds spice to the situation. Presented with mother-in-law difficulties, she burns her advertising contracts only to have her mother-in-law close the play trying desperately hard to become a witch. Suitable for high schools.—*Marion L. Stuart*

The Albyn Press

42 Frederick Street, Edinburgh 2

Costume for the Amateur, by Ken Etheridge is an excellent handbook for the director. The book is pocket size but the drawings are large enough so that characteristics of periods are easily recognized. Patterns can readily be made from the designs given. The descriptions are brief and accurate.—*Roberta Dinwiddie Sheets*

Walter H. Baker Company Boston 11, Massachusetts

Ladies' Lounge, a comedy in three acts, by Kurtz Gordon. 14 w., 1 girl, 4 extra women, if desired. Royalty, \$25.00 a single performance. There is genuine humor in the smart lines of this all-woman play, even though most of the characters are type. The scene is as the title implies, in the swanky Bellevue Manor hotel on Cape Cod, but the swank is artificial when applied to most of the guests. The plot is a continuous revelation of the true characters of the women present. This play is suitable for high school groups and for women's organizations.—*Mary Ella Bovee*

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Mention Dramatics Magazine



These scenes occurred in the production of George Kelley's satirical comedy, **THE TORCH-BEARERS**, given by drama tics students of the Oelwein, Iowa, Senior High School, with Horace S. Hoover as director.

Coming My Way, a comedy in three acts, by Robert Carlay. 7 m., 6 w. Royalty, \$10.00. Here is a typical comedy of youth in which the money making schemes of a teen-age boy succeed even though difficulties for the whole family pile up as a result. Characters are of various types. The play is comparable to many other domestic comedies which attempt to portray youth engaged in productive industry.—*Helen Mocius*

Tons O' Fun, a farce in three acts, by Jay Tobias. 5 m., 6 w. Royalty, \$10.00. The entire action takes place in one eventful afternoon as a young man with the aid of his pal undertake to discourage the matrimonial desire of the young lady his aunt has chosen for him. Hoping by drastic action to discourage this girl in order to be free to marry the girl of his own choice, he masquerades as a psychoneurotic cripple. He succeeds in his plan and all ends well. This is a typical farce with spirited action and lively repartee. This is a new play with a post war theme.—*Helen Mocius*

Plays for Early Teens, by Eva Quinean. Purchase of five copies required for production. The volume contains six little plays varying from historical to modern. They are too simple and lacking in dramatic interest for junior high, but are usable for upper grades.—*Roberta Dinwiddie Sheets*

Art Craft Play Co. Marion, Iowa

Thunderhead, a drama in one act, by Mark R. Sumner. 4 m., 3 w., Royalty \$5.00. The scene is laid in the Carolina Mountains. Lee Kirby has been falsely accused and convicted of arson. After he is released he saves the folk of his valley from a flash flood and wins his sweetheart. Rather typical folk drama.—*Roberta Dinwiddie Sheets*

Samuel French 25 West 45th Street, New York, N. Y.

I Like It Here, a comedy, by A. B. Shiffren 6 m., 3 w. Royalty, \$35.00. A charming play in which our friend, Willie Kringle, tries to fix everything in the household of Professor Maryweather. Willie is a refugee from some middle European country and is delighted to be an American citizen. Willie can cook, repair the plumbing, assist in a love-triangle, play politics, amuse the professor and dispense a good deal of homely philosophy. The other characters are well drawn, the dialog clever, the plot interesting and wholesome. Any age group that can muster a good character actor should have fun with *I Like It Here*.—*Roberta D. Sheets*

Storm Over Hollywood, a mystery comedy, by James Reach. 4 m., 7 w. Royalty, \$10.00.

Judith Mostyn, a Hollywood star, has been receiving a series of threatening letters. Her private investigator, Mike Phillips, invites to Judith's remote home the six people he believes most likely to have written the letters. As he is explaining the reason for the house party, lights go out and Judith is murdered. Dusty Lane, a radio detective and his aunt seek refuge from a storm and Dusty helps with the investigation. He works more by hunch than by science, but it is Aunt Aggie who discovers the real clue. The characters are those familiar in Hollywood: The gossip columnist, the play-boy, the stand-in, the business manager, the secretary, and another actress. The mystery is well sustained and not too over drawn.—*Roberta D. Sheets*. . . .

The Cherry Orchard, a four-act drama, by Anton Chekhov. Translated by Stark Young. 10 m., 5 w. Royalty, \$25.00. Facing eviction and the auction of their estates, the Ranevskys, Russian aristocrats, can do nothing but cling to the past and hope for a miracle. As the curtain falls, they hear the ring of the axes chopping their cherry trees and learn that their land has been sold to a peasant who formerly worked on the Ranevsky estate. The theme of the play is the passing of the old order in Russia, and the triumph of industrial civilization over the pastoral tradition. A challenging play for advanced players, for there is little physical movement but with the proper approach can be made lively, vibrant, and an all together wholesome production.—*Robert A. Ensley*

Northwestern Press 2200 Park Ave., Minneapolis, Minn.

Springtime for Patsy, a comedy in three acts, by Harold S. Gregory. 14 w., 7 m. Royalty, \$25.00. It is spring and Patsy is romantic. She falls hard for a young author and neglects, Chuck, her high school sweet-heart. The young author is in love with the English teacher. Patsy resorts to all kinds of tricks to get rid of her rival and to ensnare the author. The play is much like the run of juvenile comedies, but there is a sort of freshness about Patsy herself.—*Roberta Dinwiddie Sheets*

Dramatists Play Service 6 East 39 Street, New York 16, N. Y.

A Young Man's Fancy, a comedy in three acts, by Harry Thurschwell and Alfred Golden. 10 m., 9 w. Royalty on application. The scene of the play is laid in the boys' bunkhouse at a summer camp. The characters are counselors, campers and parents. The plot centers around the efforts of a counselor to give self-confidence plus some athletic skill, to one of the pampered young boys. His own love affair with a girl's counselor adds interest.

The play would be excellent for camp production or for a project to promote camps, but seems a bit lacking in dramatic interest for high school audiences.—*Roberta Dinwiddie Sheets*

Row-Peterson & Co. Evanston, Illinois

Ladies' Browning Circle Meets, a comedy in one act, by Enid Crawford. 12 w. Time 1890. No Royalty, but purchase of eight books required. This play is characteristic of the typical gossip group found in similar organizations. A quarrel ensues as to the superiority of Shakespeare or Browning. The clash comes when a new president is nominated and Mrs. Emerson, the present prexie, makes a disarming speech after which she is allowed to remain in office. Good for an all-woman cast.—*Lillie Mae Bauer*

Flag of the Free, a patriotic choric drama, by Elizabeth Welch. Requires a choral choir and solo speakers. Royalty \$10.00. If no admission, \$5.00. This is a stirring and impressive drama symbolizing the ebb and flow of historical change of our country from Lief Ericson to planting the American flag on Guam and Guadalcanal. It is a panorama of flags and their historical significance portrayed by pageantry and tableau effects. The scenes can be cut from small to large as desired and voices also can be many or few. Excellent for patriotic effects.—*Lillie Mae Bauer*

The Heuer Publishing Co., Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Maybe It's Love, a comedy drama in three acts, by Albert Johnson. 6 m., 7 w. Royalty, \$10.00. Ted, in order to attract Eleanor, the Reverend's daughter, gets himself involved with Butch, a detective story addict, and together they commit a theft. With the aid of an officer, a spinster and a poor Italian workman, Ted emerges with a lesson in character he will never forget. The characters, mostly teen-agers in the church group are easily portrayed by high school students. One set.—*Lillie Mae Bauer*

Boys About Bobbette, a comedy drama in three acts, by Albert Johnson. 6 m., 10 w., extras. Royalty, \$10.00. Bobbie would rather play football with the boys than serve as a model in her mother's fashion show to be staged at her home. After a heart-breaking struggle she gives up the very important football game to come down the stairs in a billowy chiffon and lace gown, but only after her girl friend has been using her femininity to teach Socko, Bobbie's favorite football friend to dance. The results, of course, are definitely in Bobbie's favor. A chance for characterization of various types of women. There is also a Korean lad. One set.—*Lillie Mae Bauer*

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men are seeking again their long neglected and inexhaustible inner resources. These are the eternal *Reference Point*. His productions include the established classics of Shakespeare, Tolstoy, Gorki, Molnar, Ibsen, Benelli and many others. Ever a believer in the American dramatist, his productions of contemporary American playwrights range from Eugene O'Neill, Robert E. Sherwood, and Sidney Howard to Philip Barry, Dorothy Parker, and Alexander Woolcott. The leading actors of the American theatre have triumphed in an Arthur Hopkins Production under his direction. Mr. Hopkins has also authored three published books: "How's Your Second Act?", "The Glory Road", and "To a Lonely Boy". Out of this rich background the lectures on Stage Direction and Production in this present book were evolved and presented at the 1947 Theatre Seminar at Fordham University. Although of special interest to directors, drama teachers, and students, *Reference Point* will prove inspirational as well as instructive for those who are not of the theatre. Price \$2.50

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